

ST. BARNABAS', BEXHILL

1891 - 1951

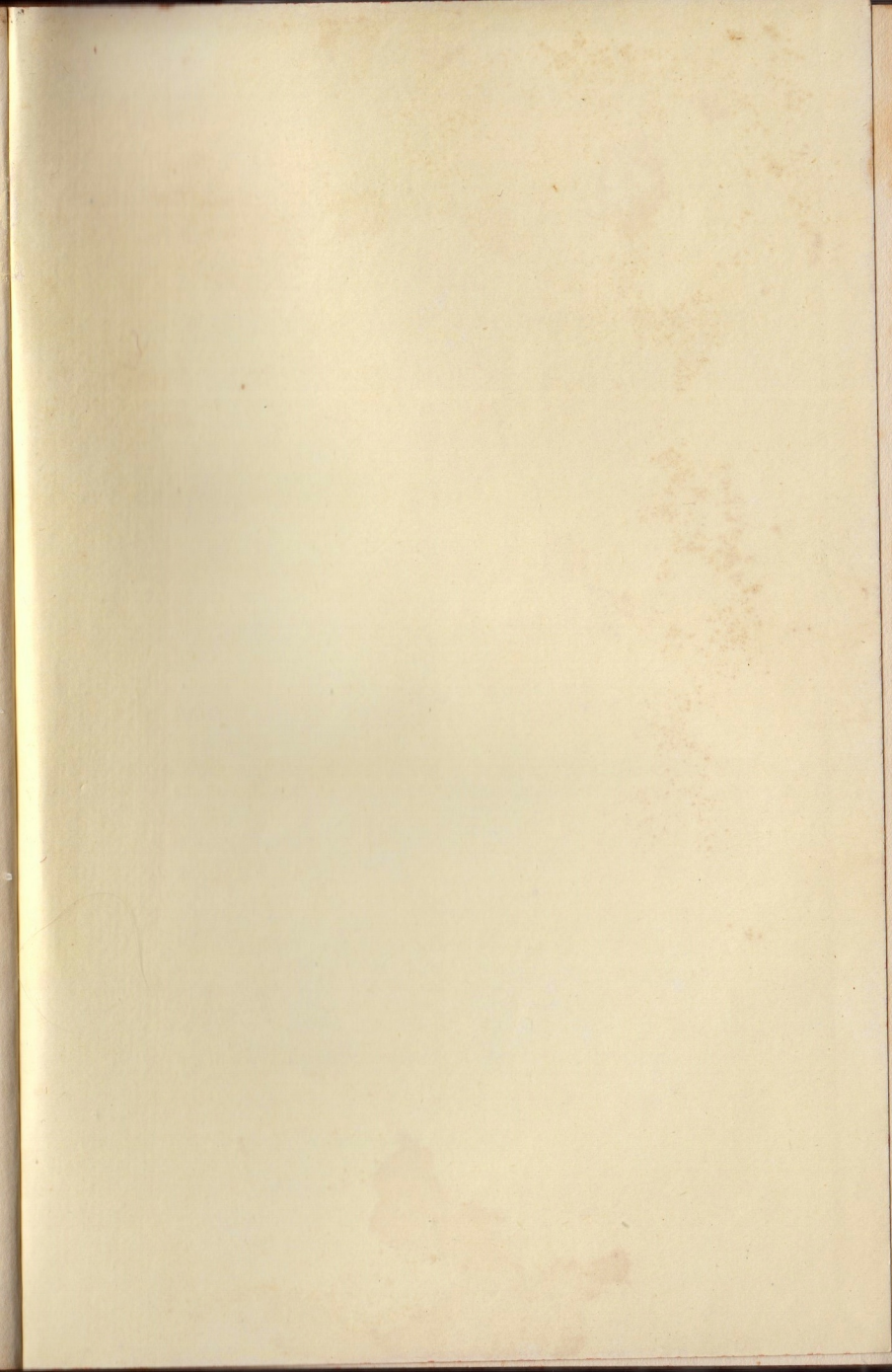


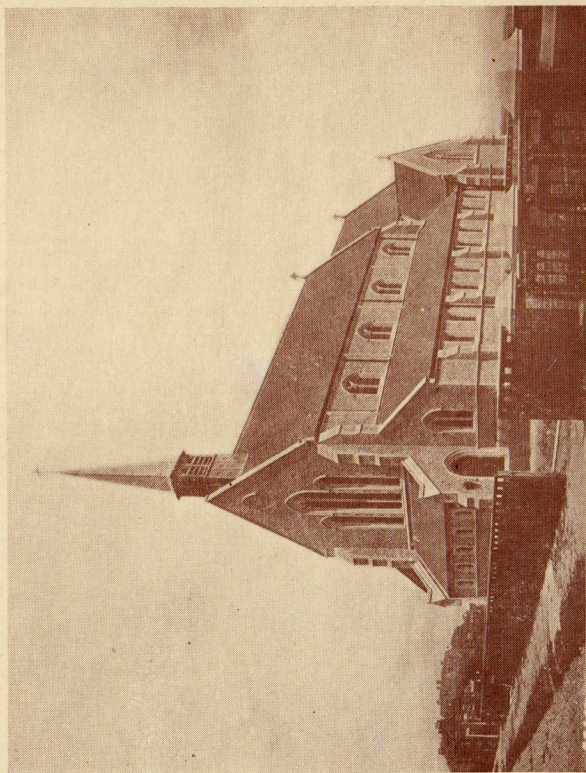
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by courtesy of Bexhill Museum

BY

NOELLA GOWING, M.A., Oxon.





St. Barnabas' Church from the south, 1891

by courtesy of Bexhill Museum

Photo

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1891 - 1951

by

~~NOELLA GOWING~~, M.A. Oxon.

Noella Gowing



With a Foreword by the Vicar,

~~The Rev. D. H. Pilkington~~, M.A.

D. H. Pilkington.



FIRST EDITION

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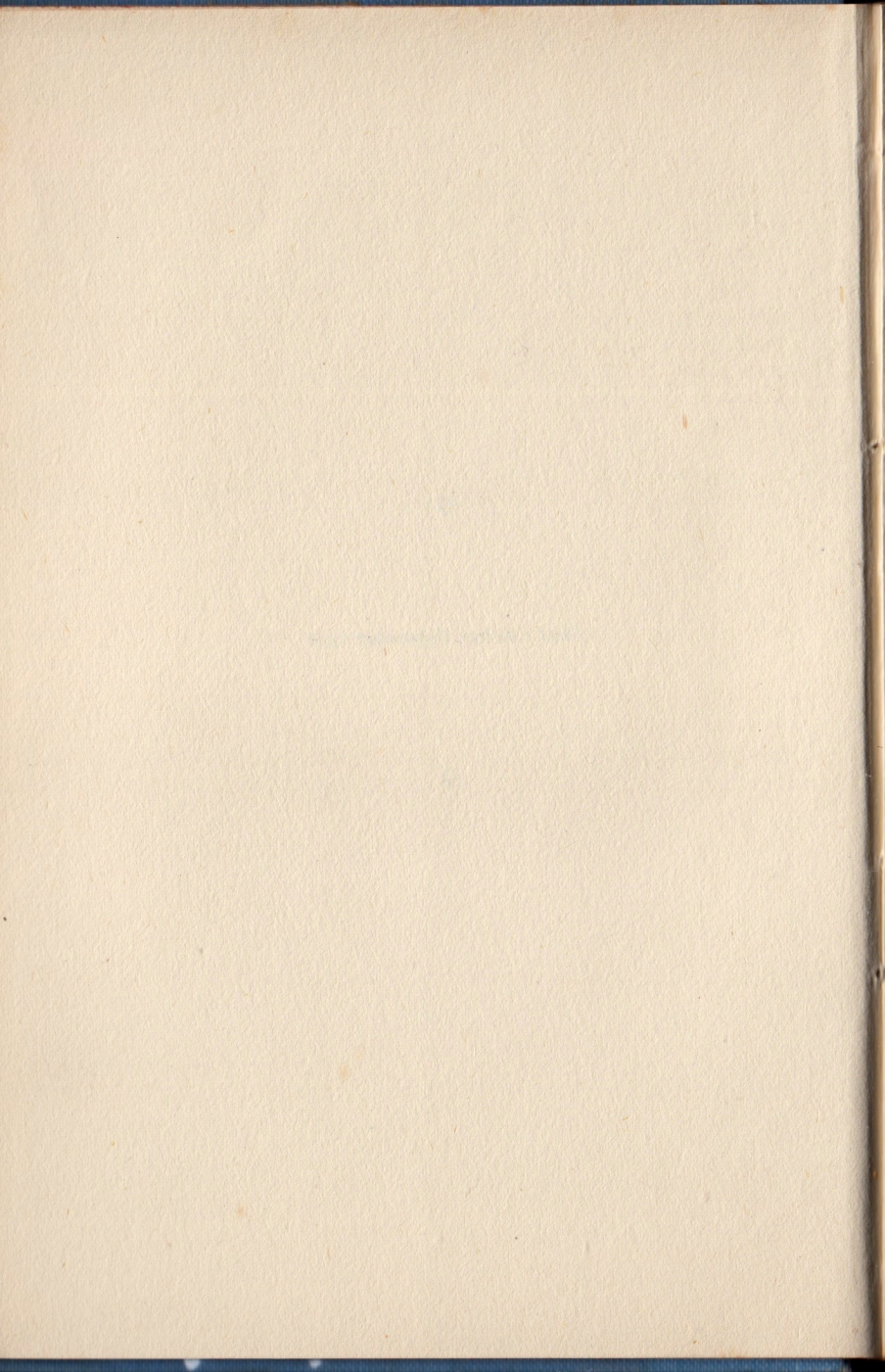
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First Edition, September 1951





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This history could not have been written without much help from others, and I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to them all,

First, I must thank the present Vicar of St. Barnabas', the Rev. D. H. Pilkington, who commissioned the work, has made many valuable suggestions, and has both lent me his own files of ST. BARNABAS' NEWS and allowed me access to the parish registers. I am very grateful to the Rev. Canon Godfrey Bell for the loan of parish magazines; to the Editor of the BEXHILL OBSERVER for allowing me to use the files of the BEXHILL CHRONICLE; to the Secretary of St. Barnabas' Parochial Church Council for letting me see the minutes of the Council; and to Mr. H. N. Granger for his collection of war-time press cuttings. I have also learned much from the conversation of Mr. F. E. Poulton and other old friends of St. Barnabas'. An obvious debt of gratitude is owed to those who have kindly loaned the illustrations; their names will be found on the appropriate pages.

I also wish to acknowledge publicly my deep gratitude to an anonymous friend of St. Barnabas' for a most generous guarantee which has made publication possible.

Last but not least, my gratitude is due to my husband both for his active help in gathering material and criticising the text, and for his patience when the book has taken me from my household duties.

NOELLA GOWING

FOREWORD

As far back as 1919, it is on record that a visiting Archdeacon suggested that a history of the parish of St. Barnabas should be compiled. The suggestion was a good one but the difficulty of finding anyone able and willing to undertake such a task must even then have proved too great. How much more formidable was this task thirty years later.

Yet it was obvious by the time of our Diamond Jubilee that the compiling of such a history was becoming a matter of real urgency. I felt it was becoming a case of "now or never", and that even as it was, it might be too late to track some of the early details of our history. It was a great relief to me when Noella Gowing agreed to undertake the work and very well she has done it. It has been a labour of love no doubt, but let no one overlook the labour.

The list of acknowledgements gives a slight idea of the work entailed and I join with the writer in thanking all those who have given their help. But I am very glad to have this opportunity of expressing to her the gratitude of all who love St. Barnabas'

I believe also that many who are not members of our congregation will read with interest this record which not only covers the history of our church but to a large extent gives a picture of the growth of Bexhill from a village into a town.

1951

DAN PILKINGTON

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ILLUSTRATIONS

1. St. Barnabas' Church from the south, 1891	<i>frontispiece</i>
	<i>opposite page</i>
2. St. Barnabas' Church during construction, 1890	16
3. Sea Road railway bridge, looking northwards, 1891	17
4. Canon Mortlock	48
5. Canon Davies	49
6. The sanctuary before refurnishing	64
7. The chancel, showing new reredos	65
8. The remains of the old vicarage	80
9. The Rev. D. H. Pilkington and the Kohlschmidt family	96

MAIN DATES

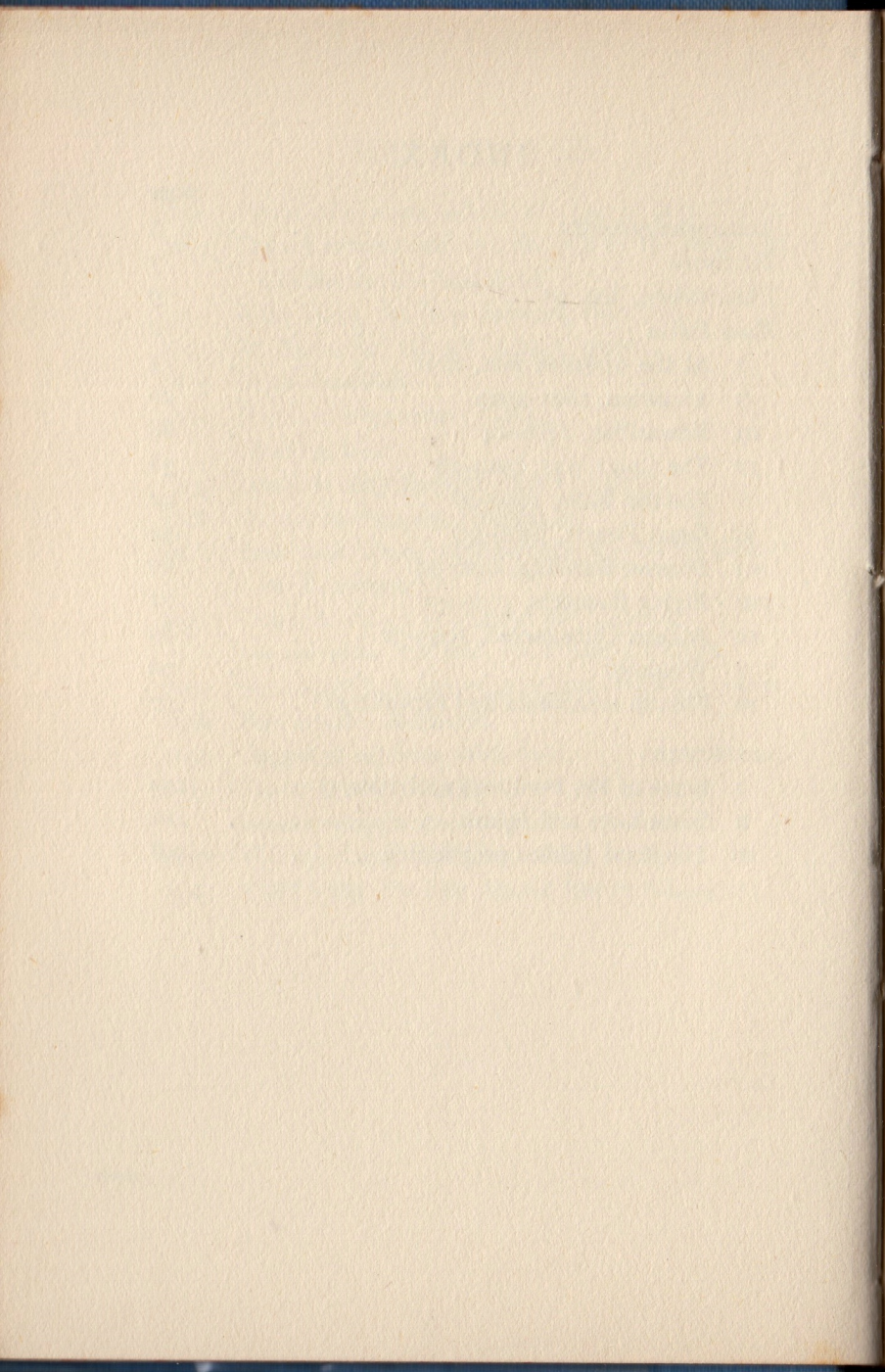
- 1890 Foundation stone laid on 18th July by Mrs. Clarke.
1891 Church consecrated on 15th July by the Bishop of
Chichester, Dr. Durnford.
First Vicar, the Rev. Edward Mortlock.
1893 St. Barnabas' Infants' School opened.
1895 Organ installed.
1896 Death of Prebendary Clarke.
Vicarage built.
1899 Death of Miss Evelyne Stanley Clarke.
1900 St. Andrew's opened in March.
1909 South aisle consecrated on 26th May by the Bishop
of Chichester.
1926 Canon Mortlock appointed to Chichester.
Second Vicar, the Rev. Basil Henry Davies.
1934 St. Augustine's consecrated and created a parish.
1936 New reredos dedicated.
1939 Chapel of All Souls dedicated.
1940 Canon Davies retired.
Sequestrators appointed.
1942 Vicarage demolished in air-raid.
1943 Third Vicar, the Rev. Daniel Holme Pilkington.

INDEX

	<i>page</i>
Acknowledgements	5
Foreword	7
Illustrations, list of	9
Main Dates	10
I At the Apostles' feet, 1891	13
II Victorian, 1891-1900	20
III Edwardian, 1900-14	28
IV The Great War, 1914-18	38
V Electric Rolls, 1919-26	42
VI Great Dearth, 1926-39	50
VII Forever Building, 1926-39	60
VIII Flying Monsters, 1939-43	71
IX Athena Unhelmeted, 1943-51	80
X Windows	92
XI Church ornaments and furnishings	97

APPENDIXES

I Some of Mr. Poulton's activities	104
II Some facts and figures	106
III Diamond Jubilee programme	108



CHAPTER

I

AT THE APOSTLES' FEET

1891

"And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet."

ACTS IV, verses 36-7

THE building of St. Barnabas' Church, Bexhill, was due to the generosity of one man, Leopold Stanley Clarke. He had been ordained deacon by the Bishop of Oxford in 1841, and his intellectual ability may be gauged from the fact that he was elected a Fellow of New College at about the same time. Soon afterwards he became chaplain to Lord Egmont, who subsequently presented him to the small country living of Lodsworth. There he remained for many years, during which his health gradually improved, so that he was also able to undertake the duties of Rural Dean. Prebendary Clarke was appointed as rector of Bexhill in 1876 and in the next thirteen years he did much to revive the church life of the town. Two mission churches and two schools were built during his incumbency, and the parish church was completely restored, some unsightly additions to the south aisle being removed. At this time the town was growing rapidly and the two churches, St. Mark's, Little Common, and St. Peter's, were too small for the expanding population, as well as being too far from the newly developed areas of the town. Towards the end of his ministry Mr. Clarke was particularly worried by the new town springing up near the sea. There was no church accommodation

in all this end of Bexhill, and St. Peter's was filled to overflowing on Sunday mornings, even although duplicate services were arranged. In 1887 Prebendary Clarke urged the provision of a temporary church south of the railway line, possibly in Sea Road, and with an adjoining parsonage and school. Yet when he retired in 1889 this idea still seemed far from realization. Then, shortly after his retirement, Leopold Stanley Clarke came into money and, in the words of Dr. Durnford, then Bishop of Chichester, "When he came into wealth he poured into God's treasury feeling that 'all things came from Him.' " He offered £5,000—a gift later increased to £6,000—for the provision of a new church. Even then public apathy still endangered the project, but this gradually diminished after Lord De La Warr had presented an acre of ground in Sea Road as the site of the church and its attendant buildings.

The foundation stone was finally laid in July 1890 by Mrs. Stanley Clarke. Unfortunately the only account of this ceremony appears to have been that in the *Bexhill Chronicle* and the file for that year was destroyed in the air-raids. The architect chosen was Sir Arthur William Blomfield (1829-99), the son of Bishop C. J. Blomfield, the famous reforming Bishop of London. He was architect to the Bank of England and also designed the original church of St. John, Upper St. Leonards. St. Barnabas' is built in the style of the Gothic revival which he favoured.

While the church was being built negotiations were proceeding as to whether or not the new district should immediately be given the status of a parish. The rector of Bexhill, the Rev. W. Leighton Greene, was at first opposed to the constitution of a separate parish, both because it would have great difficulty in being self-supporting and because it was impossible, while the town was still growing, to know the best place for the boundary. However, thanks to the continued generosity of Prebendary Clarke and to that of several other "gentle-

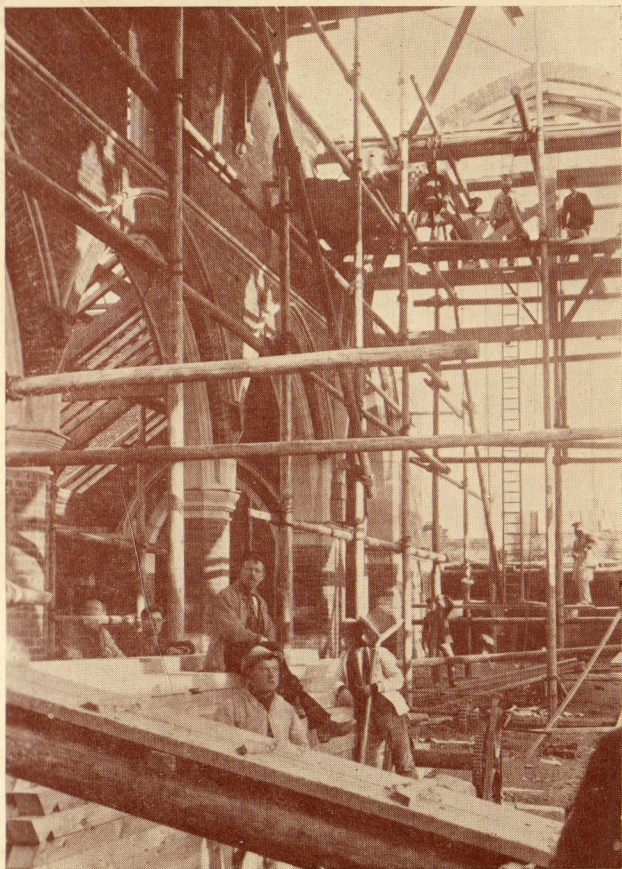
men and residents in the town " the necessary minimum endowment of £150 a year was forthcoming before the building was complete. In these circumstances the rector withdrew his objection. On 26th June 1891 an independent parish was officially declared: " The District of St. Barnabas', Bexhill, being all that part of the Parish of Bexhill, which is bounded on the east by the reputed parish of Saint Mary, Bulverhythe, upon the south by the sea, upon the north and north-west by the new parish of St. Mark, Bexhill, and upon the remaining sides, that is upon the north and north-west by an imaginary line commencing upon the boundary which divides the said new parish of St. Mark from the parish of Bexhill at a point in the middle of the road which leads from Pevensy to Bexhill, a little to the east of its junction with the road which leads from Great Collington Farm, and extending thence eastward along the middle of the first mentioned road to its junction with the foot-path which leads past the cottage known as Ransom's Cottage, and past the southern end of Hamilton Road into Bragge's Lane . . .", etc., etc. (Order of Her Majesty in Council, published in the *London Gazette*).

The church was consecrated on 15th July 1891, by Dr. Durnford, who was then in his 89th year and the oldest bishop on the bench. Despite his age he still preferred walking to travelling by carriage, thus giving evidence of that great physical vigour which had enabled him as a young man to swim across the Rhine at Cologne. Opposition to the new church had by now disappeared and the occasion was considered of sufficient importance for the contemporary account in the *Bexhill Chronicle* to cover almost two pages of that newspaper. Prebendary Clarke himself was at this time living in retirement at St. Leonards, and was too ill to be present himself. He was however represented by his wife and three children, Mr. Ronald Clarke, Miss Evelyne Clarke and Mrs. Phibbs. Lady De La Warr and Viscount Cantelupe were also

present, the latter in his capacity of churchwarden. All the principal residents of the town and neighbourhood were in the congregation and the church, built to seat 650, was well filled. The building was decorated with white flowers and on the super-altar were displayed the handsome ornaments of the church, many of them the gift of Mrs. Stanley Clarke. The choir for this service consisted of the newly formed choir for St. Barnabas', augmented by that of the parish church, and the organist was Mr. P. Shaul-Hallett, who was assisted by his brother. One of the choirboys was Master Bertram Weller, who, after the second world war, was to be appointed organist at St. Barnabas', and who is thus likely to be the only person present in an official capacity at both the consecration of the church and the celebration of its diamond jubilee. The Chancellor of the Diocese was in charge of the consecration.

The following account is taken from the *Bexhill Chronicle*:

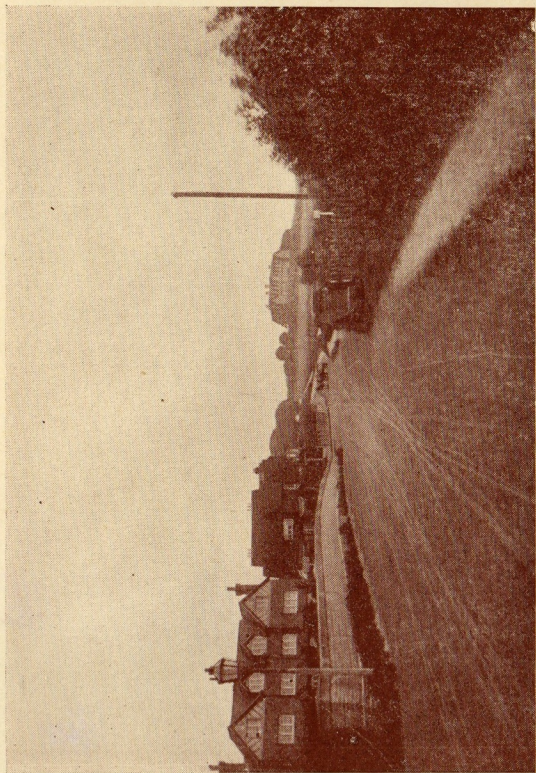
“ About eleven o'clock the ministers and clergy and the churchwardens issued from the vestry and proceeded up the north aisle of the church to the western or principal entrance to receive the Bishop who was accompanied by the Chancellor and his Chaplain (the Rev. W. L. Grane) to present him with the petition for consecration and the deed of endowment. The Bishop having signified his readiness to consecrate the church, according to the prayer of the petition, they then, led by the choir, proceeded up the nave towards the Communion table, Psalm xxiv being sung meanwhile. Arrived at the Lord's table the Bishop took his seat on the north side thereof, and the psalm having been concluded, the necessary legal deeds were presented to him. His Lordship then placed these on the Altar, and standing on the north side proceeded to ask a blessing on the new church. Other prayers, in accordance with the Church of England consecration service, followed, after which, the Bishop



St. Barnabas' Church during construction, 1890

Photo

by courtesy of Bexhill Museum



Sea Road railway bridge, looking northwards, 1891
by courtesy of Mr. B. Lucas

Photo

sitting in the chair, the sentence of consecration was read by the Chancellor and signed by the Bishop, and by him ordered to be enrolled and preserved amongst the muniments in the registry."

The Bishop also preached and took for his text the verse: "I was glad when they said unto me: We will go into the house of the Lord." In the course of his address he compared the building of a church to that of a hospital, a comparison particularly appropriate in a church where the healing work of the church was to be given such an important place. "Now perhaps," he said, "there is no work which in an equal degree serves to the glory of God and the benefit of man, no work which so combines these two great objects as the building of a church. Much may be said in favour of hospitals, but every church is, or ought to be, a hospital in which the diseases of the soul are cared for."

After the service there was a luncheon party for a selected few at the Sackville Hotel. In the evening the sermon was preached by Canon Randall, Vicar of All Saints', Clifton. Throughout the day the collections were for the two most obviously necessary causes in this new parish, "The maintenance of the services of the Church and the erection of a parish room". The octave of the consecration was kept with a daily celebration of Holy Communion.

At the time of its consecration the church consisted of a single nave, with narrow side aisles, terminating in a single chancel. The proportions of the original building may best be gauged by remembering that while the length was the same as at present, the south aisle was no wider than the north, and on each side of the church there was a small transept like that still apparent on the outside from the north. It was, in fact, perfectly symmetrical and beautifully proportioned. The organ chamber, choir and clergy vestries, were situated to the north of the chancel, although the organ hired at the time of

the consecration was temporarily fixed in the south transept. The outer facing of the church is of flint pebbles with Bath stone dressings and inside the lining is of red brick, with columns apparently of the same material, though their core is of Portland cement. The roof is open timbered of Memel fir and the floor of the nave of pitch pine blocks. There were never any pews, the chairs still in use being part of the original furnishings. The step levels of the original sanctuary were rather different from those to-day, and the floor of both sanctuary and chancel was of "Rust's well-known mosaic, in the construction of which the manufacturer claims to have discovered the secret of the old Roman mosaic workers". The choir stalls and altar and the screens enclosing the chancel are of carved panelled oak. The following contemporary comment shows a rather materialistic standard of aesthetic taste: "The front or rood screen is, perhaps, the best, it being surmounted by a very finely carved cross.* Some idea of the beauty of the particular work may be gleaned from the fact that it cost £450, Prebendary Clarke being the donor of this portion." This gift was presumably in addition to the initial £6,000, which he had stipulated should be spent on the actual church building. About a further £1,000 was contributed by local inhabitants for levelling and turfing the site and for providing the gas fittings within the church and the oak fence round it. The oak pulpit was the gift of Canon Clarke's sister and the font of Hopton stone was given by his daughter. At that time the sedilia, credence and piscina were in Bath stone with polished Purbeck stone shafts and there was a super altar of carved stonework, surmounted by a shelf of polished Purbeck. The original communion rails were of brass and ornamented to match the carved woodwork.

*Author's footnote. Mr. Poulton tells me that this cross was removed in Canon Davies' time because it obscured the view of the east window.

The gift of the living for the first time was in the hands of Prebendary Clarke and thereafter the patronage passed to the bishop. Mr. Clarke appointed Edward Mortlock, one of the curates at the Parish Church, to be the first vicar of St. Barnabas'. He had at that time been in Bexhill for four years and had previously been for the same length of time curate of Godalming, Surrey. He was educated at Haileybury College, Trinity College, Cambridge, and Wells Theological College. His appointment to St. Barnabas' was hailed with the remark, "Although we are to have an extra clergyman in the town in the person of the new vicar of St. Barnabas', yet he will really be an old friend".

In the years that followed 15th July was kept as a day of rejoicing and rededication in the parish, and this tradition continued more or less unbroken until the interregnum in the second world war. Then the day and month of the consecration was temporarily forgotten and the annual parish festival transferred to St. Barnabas' Day, the day on which it had at first been hoped to consecrate the church.



CHAPTER
II
VICTORIAN
1891-1900

DURING the first sixty years of its history the parish of St. Barnabas' has had only three vicars but more than twenty assistant curates. The three main divisions in the life of the parish are naturally those corresponding with the three different incumbencies, and these periods in turn may be subdivided as the nature of the town and parish altered with the changing times.

In many ways the first decade after the consecration of the church seems to belong to a different era to all the following years, and this is due not only to the general feeling of the passing of an age occasioned by the end of the century and the death of Queen Victoria, but also to local events, in particular to two deaths, a marriage and the opening of a new church. The two deaths were those of the Rev. Leopold Stanley Clarke on 23rd August 1896 and of his daughter, Miss Evelyne Stanley Clarke on 4th February 1899. Leopold Stanley Clarke was 76 years old when he died after a long illness. He had continued to reside at St. Leonards and had much enjoyed being driven over to Bexhill to see old friends, but during the last months of his illness he was too weak even for this. Both he and his daughter were buried in the cemetery belonging to St. Peter's Church. In 1900 Canon Mortlock surprised his parishioners, who had regarded him as a confirmed bachelor, by marrying Miss Katherine Daniell Cuddy of Bexhill Old Town, and in the same year St. Andrew's, the first daughter church of St. Barnabas', was opened.

Canon Mortlock was to remain vicar of St. Barnabas' for thirty-five years and at the end of that time it was said of him: "No one could accuse the Vicar of being a worldly parson, but he has afforded a fine example of the Christian citizen. Carefully avoiding participation in town affairs as a partisan, he has, nevertheless, given recognition and encouragement to all efforts and schemes for the public good, whether they be for the promotion of true sport, the provision of good music, the alleviation of distress, or the treatment of the sick and suffering." All of these qualities were apparent within the first ten years of his ministry at St. Barnabas'. He was concerned for the whole man and the whole community, not merely with providing services for those who came to his church.

Only a few months after the consecration of the church Canon Mortlock made himself responsible for supplying the lack of skilled nursing which both doctors and district visitors complained of in the town. He therefore engaged Nurse Cave as a parish nurse to be paid partly by those who needed her services and partly by St. Barnabas', although her work was not limited to the parish boundaries. Nurse Cave was available both for cases where only an hour or two daily was required and also, when there was no other urgent claim on her attention, for cases needing full-time care. So that all might take advantage of the scheme regardless of their financial position, several different charges were fixed. The poor could have a daily visit of an hour or less in the morning, with a second visit in the evening if the nurse thought necessary, for the small sum of 4*d.* an hour, and even undivided attention for a week only cost them 10*s.* For tradesmen the charge was 15*s.* per week and for all other residents 25*s.* per week, with laundry expenses included. At first there seemed to be little illness in the town and Nurse Cave kept asking for more work to do but in the succeeding years she often paid over 2,000

visits a year, which would seem to have satisfied her, for she continued to work in the town until she retired in 1927.

Another outstanding feature of Canon Mortlock's life, though one less universally appreciated in the town, was his temperance work. He invariably appeared in court to object to the granting of applications for new licences and frequently devoted part of his page in the magazine to the same cause. As a positive part of the same work he collected money for the provision of a coffee van for the town. This was started in 1899 and continued its usefulness long into the new century.

For the first few years Canon Mortlock lived in a house in Cantelupe Road, but soon, without making any call on the parish, though with the help of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, he built a large vicarage on the land adjoining the church. To present day tastes it seems strange that a single man should choose to build a house with fifteen large rooms for himself, but it was the normal size for a parsonage at the time it was built and doubtless Canon Mortlock thought his successors would make full use of it even if he did not. Shortly before the completion of the house a generous gift of trees and shrubs for the garden was received from J. L. Walker of Woodsgate. Perhaps this gift is responsible for the yards of privet hedges still surrounding the church property and providing a constant problem for the present-day clergy who have to do their own gardening.

At first glance the pages of the parish magazine in 1891 look surprisingly familiar. "How is Mr. Clarke now?" and "... subscriptions, as yet unpaid for the current year which our good treasurer, Mr. Poulton, is very anxious to receive..." might equally well belong to the last year or two, but other parts of the picture soon make it clear that both must refer to other gentlemen than the church officials of 1949, although Mr. F. E. Poulton did make his first appearance in St. Barnabas' parish in this

first period of its history. Yet Bexhill was a very different town then, still very undeveloped. The town drainage scheme had only recently been installed, there was no secondary school and residents were still gravely assured that nothing but shingle was really suitable as a top surface for Sea Road, the only road to cross the railway line.

The church register records rejoicings on the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria's accession and a memorial service for W. E. Gladstone. Also in the register at this period occur occasional footnotes to the collections: "Gold, 1 sovereign", "Collection contained £2 in gold". Outstanding visitors are also noted in the register. The Lord Mayor of London appears to have worshipped in the church on more than one occasion, accompanied by Lords Brassey, Neville and Cantelupe. The Duchess of Teck must have had some special interest in the neighbourhood, for she not only visited the infant school in 1895 but in the following year presided at a concert given to clear the debt on the St. Barnabas' school buildings. The register also bears witness to the attendance at Matins on Whit-Sunday 1896, of "H.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Teck, Earl Albermarle, Lady Fitzgerald, Lady Albermarle, Col. Hood, Equerry". When the Duchess died in 1897 the passing bell was tolled for her at St. Barnabas' and a memorial service held.

Lord Cantelupe was not only a sufficiently regular worshipper at the church to find the noise caused by the choir boys' boots rather trying, to remedy which he presented all the young choristers with sanctuary shoes, but was also one of the first churchwardens.

Although the church was built to hold 650 there were congregations of 700 frequently in the second summer of its existence and the need for yet more church accommodation in the southern end of the town was a cry constantly repeated. In some ways this would seem to have been the heyday of the Church in Bexhill. The

whole town shared in one church magazine, in which St. Peter's, St. Mark's and St. Barnabas' each had their own pages, and it was claimed that 10,000 copies were sold in 1893. (The price was then 2d.) By 1897 the surprising entry "Raining, but full" appears in the margin of the register of services. Yet the number of communicants even at Easter was far lower than that in the 1920s, an era not usually regarded as one of high attendances at church.

During this first decade the chancel screen was completed and the side screen fitted with glass panels. There were also some minor repairs done to the church as early as 1892 which caused the daily offices to be suspended for a time.

After a few years of the "expensive luxury" of a hired organ £700 was collected to buy one, which was duly installed in its permanent position over the choir vestry (now known as the old vestry or north vestry). It was hoped that improvements would gradually be added to the organ as money became available and in particular that hydraulic power for blowing could be inserted, as was, in fact, done within a year or two. Naturally these additions slightly interfered with the services and tidiness of the church, but at all other times daily services in a well kept building were held regularly and the first record of an archidiaconal visitation describes the church as "in all particulars in excellent and beautiful order".

In this first period of its history the main Sunday service was Matins. A choral celebration was introduced as early as 1894, but seems to have had rather a chequered career at first, being discontinued during the winter and subject to slight fluctuations of time, apparently starting at any time between 9.45 and 10 a.m. When it began at the later time there was no sermon in order that Matins might start on time. The variations in time, 9.45, 9.50 and 9.55 occur from week to week in the register of services, so perhaps they merely record when the service actually

did begin on each particular Sunday, rather than pre-meditated changes of time. On major festivals at least the choral celebration would seem always to have commenced punctually at 9.45 a.m. There was also a children's service at 3 p.m., the Litany at 4 p.m. and Evensong at 6.30 p.m. each Sunday. During the season of Lent, Canon Mortlock used to answer questions in his services at Evensong. Matins and Evensong were also said daily on weekdays, there were two weekday celebrations of Holy Communion and the Litany was said each Wednesday and Friday. There would seem to have been a fairly regular congregation at these weekday services. On Ascension Day in 1895 there were 125 people present at said Matins, an event which caused the vicar to wonder whether it would not be wise to have a sung service with sermon in future years and the following year the congregation of 200 did at least have a sermon. There was, however, one notable exception to the Sunday order of services: the choral celebration was dropped each year for the month while the curate was on holiday!

The first assistant curate at St. Barnabas' merits a few words to himself, if only because he remained in the parish for thirteen years. The Rev. W. A. Beckles, son of Bishop Beckles, first came to St. Barnabas in July 1892 and in announcing his arrival Canon Mortlock wrote "The time that Mr. Beckles may be able to be with us is uncertain; but I am not without hope that he may tarry amongst us at least for the summer and early autumn." It was to be July 1905 before he left for the living of Hartfield, to which he had been presented by Lord De La Warr. It is a pity that he died a year or two before the Jubilee for, to judge from his entries in the register of services, he would appear to have possessed a lively sense of humour. On one occasion he notes that Canon Mortlock had left for his holiday in the words "Vicar went off on his jinks". In those days the register showed the text or subject of each sermon as well as the object of the

collection and on one occasion when "W.A.B." was the preacher and the collection on behalf of the Assistant Clergy Fund, he took for his text "To what purpose is this waste?"

There must, in those days, have been rather more young people in the parish and congregation than now, for there were between forty and fifty candidates at the annual confirmation. Doubtless some of these were girls in domestic service for there are appeals to parents, employers and those with young servants, to encourage the young people in their care to be prepared.

Yet the parish was very ill equipped to deal with its children and young folk. The first time St. Barnabas' has a separate page in the magazine the position is stated: "Of course the difficulty of the situation is much increased by the want of a Parish Room, as we have, at present, no place available for the purpose of a Sunday School, or any gathering of Parishioners". For the time being the difficulty was met by a Sunday School for older boys and girls being held partly in the vicar's own house and partly in the church vestry. Early in the following year a room in the newly built house opposite the west door of the church was lent for the use of the Sunday School, which then numbered forty and could not grow much more before it would need larger accommodation. Other parish gatherings seem to have been few at first.

The town was expanding so rapidly that the need for extra day schools was also a pressing necessity. In 1893 a new infants' school was opened in Western Road to relieve the congestion at St. Peter's Infants' School. An extra room was built above those immediately needed for the school and for the next few years this served as a parish room and housed parochial teas, ladies' working parties, mothers' meetings, Bible classes, etc. Yet it was not long before the upper room too was needed to provide school accommodation, this time for a girls' school. Even

before it was taken over permanently by the girls' department it had served for a few months as an annexe to part of the boys' school, prior to their move to the new premises in Reginald Road. The latter was opened at the beginning of 1898 and as its headmaster Mr. F. E. Poulton began his long connection with the parish and church of St. Barnabas. Canon Mortlock himself always took a great personal interest in the management of the various church schools in his parish.

While still a curate at St. Peter's he had already given evidence of his concern for the social welfare of the town through the prominent part which he had played in the building and establishing of the Institute in Upper Station Road. The Institute was built as a memorial of Queen Victoria's Jubilee and was intended as a non-alcoholic club centre. Although it was not in St. Barnabas' parish, Canon Mortlock always continued to take a very warm interest in its work and welfare. In later years it was taken over by the Church Army.



CHAPTER

III

EDWARDIAN

1900-14

THE uncomfortable fullness of the existing churches was bound soon to lead to further building, the only question being whether St. Peter's and St. Barnabas' should be enlarged or new mission chapels erected. In the end both parishes decided on the second course. In the case of St. Barnabas' a site was acquired in Wickham Avenue in order to provide for West Bexhill. It was a severe drain on the financial resources of so young a parish, which had already had to face heavy expenditure on new school buildings. To make matters yet more difficult Canon Mortlock had very strict ideas about the ways of raising money which were suitable in the case of building a church. For school buildings or a parish room, all such means as bazaars, sales of work, and amateur entertainments were perfectly permissible, but for a church he felt direct giving was the only desirable way. The plans for the new mission church of St. Andrew were drawn by Mr. Wall and the work carried out by Mr. Bailey. The foundations were laid in January 1899 and the church was opened, still with a heavy debt, in March of the following year. It was licensed by the Bishop for the carrying on of Divine Service and the administration of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, and thenceforth St. Barnabas' parish had a second curate to be in charge of this church and the west end of the parish. Only a month after the licensing of St. Andrew's in south Bexhill the new church and parish of St. Stephen's was

consecrated and both new churches speedily gained large congregations.

Once again the population outgrew the church accommodation of the town (in 1891 St. Barnabas' parish contained 1,500 inhabitants; by 1905 there were 5,000) so that worshippers had to be turned away from the doors of St. Barnabas', and within the next decade enlargements were made both to the old parish church of St. Peter's and to St. Barnabas' itself. This time there was to be less financial difficulty for St. Barnabas', thanks to the generosity of the founder's family. Early in 1906 a legacy of £12,298 from Miss Evelyn Stanley Clarke was paid to the parish of St. Barnabas to be used for purposes of church work and extension within the parish, though with the condition that it was not to supplement in any way the normal expenditure incurred in connection with church services. The trustees of the legacy were Mr. Ronald Stanley Clarke, Archdeacon Sutton and the vicar. They drew up a scheme as follows:

To repaying overdraft upon St. Andrew's Building Fund . . .	£620
To repaying grants from Chichester Diocesan Association . . .	£110
To defraying costs of enlargement of St. Barnabas' . . .	£6,500
To the erection of a parish hall .	£5,000

However, counsel's opinion was that an undue proportion of the legacy was being expended on building operations and therefore the last item was amended to read "To increasing Permanent Endowment of the Cure (now standing at £191 per annum)—£5,000" and, in this amended form, the scheme was sanctioned by the Court.

Several years previously when the question of enlargement was under discussion, plans and a perspective drawing were prepared by Sir Arthur Blomfield himself

and as these had been preserved they were able to be used almost in their entirety when Sir Arthur Blomfield and Sons were again asked to plan for the addition of an extra 400 places. Thus the church had practically the advantage of all being designed by the same architect although he had died in 1899 and the new aisle was not added till almost ten years later. Several firms were invited to submit tenders for the work and that of Messrs. Dove Bros. Ltd. of Islington was finally accepted. During the building the daily offices had to be discontinued and throughout the alterations were instead said at St. Andrew's. The new portion of the church was dedicated by the Bishop of Chichester in May 1909. Mrs. Clarke was unfortunately not able to be present, but the family was represented by Mr. Ronald Stanley Clarke, the Rev. Mr. Harlow and Mrs. Phibbs. This addition to the church made it capable of seating over 1,000. The main body of the church was actually larger then than it is now, for the south aisle continued to the west wall of the church with the font and baptistry at its west end, where the Chapel of All Souls now is. Although nearly as wide as it was long the building was alleged to be no more difficult acoustically than when it was first built. Perhaps Canon Mortlock was over optimistic in making this judgement, but on the other hand it may not have been till a later alteration that the present difficulties arose. The added space did, however, prove to have a detrimental effect on the warmth of the church. Despite this great extension to the church it was again filled to capacity on more than one occasion the following year. It must be remembered that some of the vast numbers present may be accounted for by the presence of several boarding schools, but these can hardly have affected the numbers for August.

The original mechanical blowing apparatus for the organ also proved inadequate at this time and it was found necessary to instal an electric blower. In the end a yet more far-reaching change was made, for in 1911

there is a reference to the completion of the organ and a detailed specification of the instrument appeared in the magazine.

By now it was St. Andrew's turn for extensions, and these were effected by the addition of new vestries in 1912 and a fund for building the chancel to that church was begun the following year, but had not reached a high enough figure for work to be started before the war broke out.

In between these major events the everyday life of the parish continued, with few changes in the regular services and a steadily increasing number of parish organizations. The Choral Eucharist on Sundays still varied slightly from week to week as to its time of commencement, till as late as 1907, but it was no longer suspended during the curate's summer holiday. Matins still remained the chief service and in the years before the addition of the south aisle the times of the Sunday services were rearranged each August so that Matins could be sung twice and thus provided for all who wished to attend. The magazine also contained a footnote: "Parishioners and Visitors alike are asked, as far as possible, to refrain from bringing young children to the 11.15 service during August." Nor was Matins the only service to have record congregations. In 1910 Canon Mortlock was able to write: "In these days when one hears complaints about the scarcity of worshippers at Evensong, I have been much struck with what seems to be the increasingly great number of those present at the evening services."

The number of those annually presented for confirmation too remained high and on one occasion when the confirmation service was held at St. Barnabas' the church was filled to overflowing. Two or three confirmation services were held in the town each year, which meant that there was one in St. Barnabas' itself about once a year. This sounds excessive, yet as many as 195 people were confirmed on one occasion. There was, however, a

slight falling off in church attendance amongst those who had been confirmed. To counter this Canon Mortlock proposed holding post-confirmation classes for young communicants, in which they could learn more about the sacrament of Holy Communion. It also caused him to query whether adolescence was the best age for confirmation and whether it might not be wiser to encourage younger children to be confirmed.

Yet there was another side to the picture. The harvest festival service used to be held on a week-day and one year there is a marginal note against Matins in the register of services: "On duty 24, Congregation 25". Nor was the financial situation completely satisfactory: the accounts showed a deficit even in those years when the congregations were at their highest, and sales of work had to be held to clear the debt. Finally the vicar was moved to expostulate: "I am not one of those who despise copper coins. In fact St. Barnabas' could not exist long without the offerings of those who are not rich. Still, 300 pennies and halfpennies from a fashionably-attired congregation on a Sunday morning in August seems to need some explanation."

At no stage in its history has St. Barnabas' been a church which could boast of frequent weddings but there were at least many more in the Edwardian era than now, as many as three in three days on one occasion, and it was even known for there to be two weddings on the same day occasionally. Once again similarity of names makes it dangerously easy to forget how long ago all these events were. Surely one would not expect to find mention of Mr. Pilkington taking services in those days, and his wife busying herself with good works, at least not in the parish of St. Barnabas, and indeed closer inspection shows that in those days the initials were E. N.

Right at the beginning of the century a company of the Church Lads' Brigade was started. This remained for years a very flourishing organization and in course of

time they were to win awards for rifle shooting. The first recruits had to be at least thirteen years of age and to have left the Day School. They met weekly in the drill hall in Windsor Road and so did not suffer from the handicap of there being no parish hall. This want, however, severely restricted the number of other regular gatherings. The vicarage was still used to house a class for young women and servants—after their Christmas party a word of thanks appeared in the magazine “to several ladies who kindly allowed their maids to be present on that occasion”—every Sunday afternoon, though servants were allowed to attend fortnightly if that was more convenient to their employers. A Bible class for young men was held in St. Andrew’s vestry, as was also one for adults. A little library was meanwhile being built up in a cupboard in St. Barnabas’ church by a layman, Mr. Traver, for the use of other laymen of the parish. It was to contain specifically religious books, the best book on any particular subject being included irrespective of possible disagreement with the author on certain points. “For instance,” wrote Canon Mortlock on the project, “I shall not hesitate to include such a book as Dr. Dale’s upon ‘The Atonement’, although, of course, the late Dr. Dale was a Nonconformist divine.”

In 1908 a solution to the parish hall problem appeared in sight. It was decided to buy a plot of ground in Victoria Road, and build a proper hall there as soon as funds permitted. Meanwhile there were already two smaller rooms on the site, 30 feet by 12 feet, and these could be used at once for smaller gatherings. They were, in fact, both in use regularly four evenings a week from the time of their acquisition. The C.L.B. also moved to a drill hall in Victoria Road.

After a time it was felt that a more economical step than building a completely new hall would be to strengthen a large warehouse which already existed on

the Victoria Road site, and which had two floors. Towards this end sales of work were held in successive years at the Kursaal and in the Skating Rink. Yet even with the greater latitude in ways of raising money that was permissible now it was merely a hall to be built, the funds were very slow in coming in and there is no record that the hall ever materialized.

Thanks, however, to the club rooms, there was a far more varied parochial life than previously. Branches of the Church of England Men's Society, of the Girls' Friendly Society, and of the Mothers' Union, all met regularly for both study and recreation.

The coffee van continued its work of providing non-alcoholic refreshments. For many years it stood in Magdalen Road, and then in 1907, it was moved to the Sackville Road railway arch, which was likely to be of greater convenience to its customers.

Nurse Cave too continued her work faithfully through the opening years of the century and this was no doubt made easier for her by the gift of a bicycle, whose arrival Canon Mortlock described to his parishioners in humorous style. "Santa Claus was busily occupied in Bexhill on Christmas Eve, and one errand proved almost too much for him—you see he had to take a beautiful bicycle as a gift to our Parish Nurse, and, of course, it *is* a difficult thing getting a bicycle down a chimney. But Santa Claus accomplished the impossible, for I saw his Christmas gift in Nurse's room myself. Nurse Cave doesn't believe in Santa Claus as she ought to do, and in the most prosaic way in the world has told me so, and begged me to thank, from her very heart, all those kind friends who have contributed to give her such a beautiful bicycle. This I am delighted to do, for it certainly was most generous of them all. Still, Nurse ought to believe more in Santa Claus, and not speak of him as 'Rubbish'."

The story offers conflicting evidence as to whether Canon Mortlock himself did or did not believe in Santa, but it shows that Nurse Cave was doubtless capable of dealing firmly with even the most recalcitrant of patients, notwithstanding the fact that she paid 2,340 visits one year and 3,273 another. The scales of pay would seem to have been abolished at some stage, for in 1913 attendance on general cases was referred to as the department of the work for which no pay was asked. Some years before this a second nurse had been appointed to work in the parish and she, unlike Nurse Cave and the nurse St. Peter's had introduced after her example, was trained to deal with maternity cases in particular.

In 1907 unemployment, during at any rate the winter months, began to afflict the town. The vicar hoped that the Local Authority would alleviate it as far as possible by providing temporary work, such as the long necessary road repairs. Much was done on these lines, but still the problem continued and the churches of the town took united action under the leadership of St. Barnabas' by providing a Labour Yard on the premises of Mr. W. H. Sanders in Dorset Road. This was open for some time in the winter of 1908. Twenty hands a day were employed in the yard, and although twice the number were in need of work, it did at least mean that £70 had passed into some of the most needy pockets.

Another matter of town-, and indeed nation-wide, interest over which Canon Mortlock felt specially concerned was that of education, and this was brought to a head by what he refers to as the "so-called Education Bill" of 1906. The Bill was defeated, but its memory continued to rankle with Canon Mortlock, and he found frequent occasion to jibe at State interference in Church schools, and in particular at the idiosyncrasies of H.M. Inspectors. It was at least unfortunate that their recommendations were so contradictory. The girls' school had been certified by the education authorities to

accommodate 120, the boys' school 220. The visiting inspectors reduced the sanctioned number of places in one school by twenty, but increased it in the other. Another inspector insisted that the large schoolroom for the infants could only be sanctioned if a gallery was provided; a later H.M.I. took exception to the gallery, and threatened to cut down the accommodation permitted by thirty places unless the gallery was forthwith removed. Under all these pinpricks was the general controversy over the right for definite Church teaching to be given in the schools which Church people had built and equipped.

Canon Mortlock was not the only one on the staff of St. Barnabas at this time to take a lively interest in education. The senior assistant curate, the Rev. H. V. R. Bromley, not only took three paying pupils at his house in Wilton Road, but was also appointed by the authorities at Cambridge as honorary secretary of the University Extension lectures in the town. Mr. Bromley possessed a variety of talents, for he is also reported to have won a needle-threading race.

Meanwhile the disendowment of the Welsh church was causing the vicar deep concern. He had foreseen this danger as early as 1895 and in 1911 he published long articles by Church leaders on the subject in his magazine. Nor was he content to let the matter rest until he had persuaded the Eastry Vestry at St. Barnabas' to pass a resolution in protest. "The parishioners of St. Barnabas', Bexhill, in Easter Vestry assembled, unanimously protest against the proposal to disestablish and to disendow the four Welsh Dioceses. They especially deprecate the confiscation to secular purposes of endowments consecrated to the service of God." Unfortunately neither this protest nor a solemn warning issued by the majority of the bishops sufficed to deter parliament.

The Easter Vestry of the following year, 1913, marked the end of an era for St. Barnabas'. Dr. Wills who had served as vicar's warden since St. Barnabas' had been constituted a separate parish, felt obliged to resign that office as professional duties prevented him giving sufficient time to his responsibilities as churchwarden.



CHAPTER

IV

THE GREAT WAR

1914-18

THE most striking thing about the life of St Barnabas' during the 1914-18 war is how little it was affected by the war, especially when contrasted with the events of the 1940s. When the war began the vicar hailed it as a season of national discipline, a sort of prolonged Lent. A call to special prayer and intercession was made. To a certain extent this attitude continued throughout the war. Summer outings and Christmas treats were held, but shamefacedly, with an apologetic "perhaps the children will enjoy it" approach. A list of those from the parish serving in the forces was compiled, and those on it were regularly commended to God's protection. Several choirmen and servers were among the volunteers, which left Canon Mortlock (to his own surprise) rejoicing over a depleted choir.

There were, of course, some other ways in which the outbreak of war brought a change. The presence of a large camp at Cooden was felt in many ways and St. Barnabas' tried to make provision for the soldiers thus brought to the town. The old Institute was turned into a soldiers' club and the members of the C.E.M.S. tried to make them feel at home. Amongst other things provided were instruction in French, hot baths in private houses, and a short service at the Institute on Sunday evenings. The Institute was crowded every evening, and the wives of the C.E.M.S. were called in to provide refreshments,

sometimes as many as 190 cups of tea in an evening ! Another welcome feature of the Institute was the letter-writing room.

Enemy aircraft caused some distress, for in the summer of 1915 Canon Mortlock wrote: " The insurance against aircraft is placing another very considerable expense upon us, but one which I think it is not prudent entirely to ignore. It seems, however, a strange commentary on what we were told would be the sad fate of any flying monsters which dared to approach our shores. Immense sums will be paid by the community to the Government by way of insurance under the scheme. Perhaps in the future we shall pay more attention to Mr. Joynson-Hicks and others, who advocated so strongly the increase in the number of our flying machines." This appears to be the only reference to any direct effect of hostile planes on the town, except for the blackout, which necessitated afternoon Evensong at St. Barnabas' in the winter months.

The church bell was rung daily at noon as a reminder to prayer for those who were fighting in France and elsewhere. In 1917 a " National Lent " of voluntary food rationing was proclaimed in the country and appeals for this were published in St. Barnabas' page of the magazine, though not in that of any of the other local churches. News, even of town or nation-wide interest, so seldom appears under more than one parish in the same months that it looks as if there may have been some co-ordination between the different editors.

All services appear to have been at least normally well attended during the war years and the number of confirmation candidates continued high, but for the first time month followed month without there being any weddings. In compensation there were as many as eight in one month shortly after the end of the war. In the Diocese as a whole a change started just before the war

was to continue. The "Sacred Synod" of all the licensed clergy of the diocese was held for the first time since 1295 and shortly afterwards the General Diocesan Synod of clergy and laity was called into existence.

After the first month or two of the war nothing further appears about the chancel for St. Andrew's, which in fact was never added, and it is probable that was in part at least due to the war. Yet at St. Barnabas' itself embellishments of the church continued. A screen and window were placed in the Lady chapel in memory of Dr. Wills, one of the first churchwardens, and the great east window was filled with coloured glass. The parish nursing continued its good work, but had by now grown to such a size that it was decided it was time to organize it on a town scale and when this was done Jubilee House was taken as the town clinic. It would appear to have been a sort of miniature national health scheme. In bringing this change about a leading part was taken by Councillor F. W. Vane, who was soon afterwards churchwarden at St. Barnabas'.

Although the services continued to be held as usual the Sung Eucharist began to grow in importance at this time. Linen vestments had been introduced in 1913 and in 1915 the adult members of the choir as well as the twenty-four boys began to attend this service. The organist at this time was Mr. Alan Thorne from Penzance. His predecessor, Mr. A. P. Howe had been a pupil of the first organist, Mr. Shaul Hallett, who had left for California in 1907. Besides training the choir for their normal work in church services Mr. Howe also produced such works as "Olivet to Calvary" and "The Crucifixion" with them. He was also Director of the Bexhill Music Society and often gave organ recitals himself. Later he became professor of singing at the Guildhall School of Music.

As the war approached its end two war memorials were arranged. The first was the little war-shrine which still

stands in the churchyard to the west of the church, though it has been considerably altered since it was first erected. This was presented by a parishioner who had lost a close relation in 1917 and at the end of the war the names of others lost from the parish of St. Barnabas' were added to it. In later years Canon Davies was to consider this an inadequate parish memorial but he would seem to have forgotten that it was in the first place a personal monument and that the parish as a whole had given their offerings towards the "Peace" window at the west end of the nave as a thanksgiving to God for victory and in memory of those who had died.

(For detailed descriptions of both this and the east window see chapter on WINDOWS.)



CHAPTER

V

ELECTRIC ROLLS

1919-26

"Nor was the exact meaning of the words 'electoral roll' at once clear to the less enlightened. In many parishes, under the terms of some local benefactor's will, loaves of bread used to be distributed to the aged and deserving poor at the church door on Sunday morning, and more than one letter contained a request for fuller information about the 'electric rolls' which were now, it was understood, to be included in the bounty of Mother Church."

IREMONGER—*Life of William Temple*

DISSIMILAR as is the life of the early twenties to that of 1951 in most ways, in parochial life it approaches far nearer to that of the present day than any of the preceding decades. For the first time the ordinary layman began to feel and to shoulder more responsibility for at any rate the material organization of his parish church. Naturally St. Barnabas' shared in this general development and in 1926 the change was made more marked by the first new vicar since the church was consecrated. Yet at the same time old traditions and interests, some of which have since been abandoned, still continued.

As usual there were many minor repairs and alterations that needed making to the church building. The little spire needed extensive repairs and these were carried out by Mr. J. Rogers; the organ had to be overhauled and repaired, a job that deprived the church of its use for two months, a loss which was mitigated by Miss Burrows lending hers for this period; a new brass eagle

lectern was provided thanks to the generosity of parishioners and visitors and to the initiative of Mr. Vane; and, least visible, but perhaps most essential, the boiler had to be replaced by a new and stronger one.

Average church attendances remained high, with an increasing number of communicants and a steady annual figure of over fifty confirmation candidates. When comparing these figures with those of confirmation candidates since the second war it should be remembered that the majority of the children came from the big schools which attended St. Barnabas' and most of the remainder from the St. Andrew's end of the parish. (See appendix II.)

All the church organizations started before the war were still in existence and there were still enough young people in the parish to supply members for the classes (two of them now) for young women and servants, for the Church Lads' Brigade, for a girls' club, a youths' Bible class, and for branches of the Girls' Friendly Society and King's Messengers.

Interest in nursing was still keen and no longer concentrated on Nurse Cave's work alone. The Bexhill Nursing Association was warmly supported, the proposed new Royal East Sussex Hospital at Hastings, with a special Bexhill ward, was welcomed with enthusiasm, and for those interested in the spiritual side of healing there were local branches of both the Guild of Health and the Guild of St. Raphael.

Immediately after the war Canon Mortlock expressed great hopes that the lesson of the war would not soon be forgotten but would rather bring about great changes in social and industrial conditions. In particular he was sure that if the limitation of licensed hours for public houses, introduced during the war, were to be continued it would indeed be "a mighty gain which God has given to us from our days of loss." On the other hand he deeply deplored the Council's action in opening the public park

on Sundays and permitting games to be played there on that day, because of the extra work entailed by this for some sections of the community. The moral side of national questions also was not overlooked. For example, the magazine called attention to the Bishop of Chichester's (then Dr. Burrows) remarks about the Divorce Bill, ending with an appeal to all laymen to write to their M.P. and urge him to vote against any measure for increasing the facilities of divorce.

The church register continues to record the normal periodical visitation by successive archdeacons. In 1919 the archdeacon suggested that a parish history should be compiled, but apparently that was to wait another thirty-two years ! Six years later a different archdeacon was to suggest that the parish magazines should be filed, and this was done with Mrs. Mortlock being their first custodian and insisting that they should be kept in a locked cupboard. At the instigation of this archdeacon the church deeds were also placed in a locked box and entrusted to a bank, an inventory of them being kept in the church safe.

In earlier years, presumably, all the deeds and official documents relating to the church had been in Canon Mortlock's hands as vicar, but the early twenties had seen the handing over of certain responsibilities to the laity. Prior to 1919 all matters of ecclesiastical law-making were the concern of Parliament, a workable arrangement as long as the House of Commons consisted of members of the established church and had time to spare for such questions. By the beginning of the twentieth century this state of affairs no longer existed and the effect of parliamentary control over the church was paralysing.

During the 1914-18 war the Life and Liberty movement under William Temple, inspired by the National Mission with the conviction that the church must set its own house in order, called attention to the need for the

creation of some system of self-government, so that anomalies of church finance and organization could be regulated without having to wait on the pleasure of an already overworked Parliament. The result of this Movement was the Enabling Act of 1919 by which the National Church Assembly was created, with two houses of clergy and one of laity. Measures passed by this Assembly are forwarded to the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament and if approved by Parliament have the force of law.

At first sight this Enabling Act does not seem to have much importance for the history of St. Barnabas or of any other parish, but self-government now reached right down through Church hierarchy. Parochial church councils, ruridecanal and diocesan conferences were now made statutory and the members of these were to be elected by baptised members of the Church. Formerly such power over parish matters as was not in the hands of the vicar, had been in those of the churchwardens appointed by the Easter Vestry, which was composed of certain rate-payers, irrespective of whether they were or were not Christians. Although, doubtless, those who were not interested in the Church normally did not exercise their right to attend the Easter Vestry, the position was open to abuse. Now all those who had been baptised and who were eighteen years old were eligible to be placed on the Roll of Electors of either their parish church or the church at which they habitually worshipped. Through this body of laymen and women, and more particularly through the councils and conferences elected by them, the Church Assembly could ascertain the opinion of the ordinary members of the Church.

Of the newly-formed parochial church councils the Act said: "It shall be the primary duty of the Council in every parish to co-operate with the Incumbent in the initiation, conduct and development of church work both within the parish and outside." The P.C.C. was empow-

ered to deal with church finance, to discuss matters connected with the fabric of the church, any matters referred to it from one of the higher councils, and, (although this remained the responsibility of the vicar alone,) the conduct of the church services.

The first step in the setting up of this elaborate and extremely democratic form of church government was the compilation of the Electoral Roll. At St. Barnabas' it was Mr. Poulton who inscribed the names, more than 1,600, on the first roll in 1920. Canon Mortlock urged his parishioners to nominate as their representatives only those known to have a real interest in the Church's work. The parish meeting only had to be called once a year and the minimum number of meetings per year for the P.C.C. was four. At first there were no meetings beyond this compulsory minimum, but as the years pass it is interesting to note their increasing frequency, as well as the greater number both of sub-committees appointed and of subjects discussed. At the second meeting of St. Barnabas' P.C.C. a special finance committee was appointed. In the light of future events it is not surprising to learn that Mr. Poulton was one of those chosen to serve on it.

As a result of the Enabling Act many of the duties formerly placed upon the churchwardens were now the responsibility of the church council and apparently there was some feeling that the office of churchwarden had become so unimportant that the right people would no longer be willing to undertake it—a sad commentary on the motives of the "right people". Canon Mortlock endeavoured to explain that this was not, in fact, the case, and that there still remained valuable work for them to do, by publishing a statement by Chancellor Errington. "First and foremost, you are still the officers of the Bishop. None of your duties in this respect are taken away by the Measure; indeed, your powers, duties, and liabilities with respect to Visitations are expressly reserved. You still, therefore, represent the Bishop,

exercising his Ordinary jurisdiction through the Consistory Court in all matters of order and discipline. It is for you to maintain order in the church, to seat the congregations . . . to present to the Ordinary all breaches of ecclesiastical law that come to your notice, including any irregularities in the conduct of your clergy; and . . . to make such returns at Visitation as will enable the proper authority to judge whether . . . the parish church has been properly cared for and the services properly conducted during the period for which you have to answer . . .” That is only part of the list of their duties, which also includes that of being joint treasurers of the council.

The Electoral Roll for the parish of St. Barnabas' remained at 1,600 for several years, entitling the parish to four representatives on the diocesan council (which had, as a result of the national Act, replaced the old General Synod in the diocese of Chichester). However, the Freewill Offering Scheme which was started in 1921 could not boast anything like such a long list of supporters. This scheme was an appeal from laymen (the new finance committee) to laymen, and was introduced as an attempt to put the church finances on a sounder basis than that of casual collections at services. At the beginning the scheme brought in over £300 a year, but it was felt that this should be raised to £400 as soon as possible. This was a difficult task, for in succeeding years there were often more members who left the parish than newcomers who joined.

It is interesting to compare the number of those on the electoral roll with the subscribers to the F.W.O. In 1921 there were 1,640 electors and 329 subscribers, and by 1930 although the electoral roll still contained about 1,400 names, the F.W.O. had only 200 contributors.* (In 1950 the electoral roll contained only 344 names, but

*At this time the parish of St. Barnabas' stretched westwards to Little Common and the free will offering figures include worshippers at St. Andrew's.

there were 146 in the F.W.O. scheme, so this smaller roll is probably more truly representative of the parish.)

Another new development was suggested in 1924 at the parish meeting, namely "that a new book of chants should be introduced into the church as the Cathedral Psalter was very old and well used and the congregation were tiring of them." Unfortunately the gentleman who supported this proposal also added that the cost would be somewhat heavy "and it was therefore decided to defer the matter for a while to see whether funds would permit of same." The new book of chants, the Oxford Psalter, was not introduced until 1949.

Since St. Andrew's was opened as a mission chapel in 1900 it had gradually been growing more independent and its congregations had increased in size until the building was frequently full. An organ had been installed and gifts, such as a lectern and altar hangings, presented, and one of the assistant curates at St. Barnabas' was appointed to work especially in connection with St. Andrew's. The town continued to spread westwards and by the middle of the 1920s it looked as though the future of Bexhill might lie in that direction. A need for further church accommodation was again felt and a commission appointed by the Bishop reported that it would be desirable to build a new church near West Bexhill Halt (Collington Halt). A site was bought at the sea end of Sutherland Avenue.

While plans for a West Bexhill church were still in their infancy St. Barnabas' experienced its first change of vicar. Canon Mortlock, who since 1922 had been Rural Dean of Hastings as well as vicar of St. Barnabas', accepted a resident Canonry in Chichester Cathedral and the incumbency of St. Peter the Great, Chichester, commonly called the Sub-Deanery Church. It was painful to both him and Mrs. Mortlock to leave the town where they had lived for the greater part of their lives. He left St. Barnabas' on 1st June 1926.



Canon Mortlock

Photo

from an old print, D. R. Miller



Canon Davies

Photo

Lafayette

To mark his departure there was a gathering of 350 parishioners at the Sackville Hotel, where he was presented with an illuminated address and personal gifts for himself and his wife, as well as a large cheque. A speaker on that occasion described his long association with the town in words that cannot be bettered: "Forty years ago he came to Bexhill and found it little more than a beach; he had known it from the time it was a baby and he left it a strong and growing young thing, upon whose life he had left an indelible impression and a lasting influence."

Later he became Precentor of the Cathedral and left the Vicarage of St. Peter's to live at the Treasury within the precincts of the Cathedral. He retained his interest in St. Barnabas', occasionally visited Bexhill and was more often himself visited by old friends from the town. He lived to the age of 85 and his death in 1945 was recorded in St. Barnabas' magazine by the vicar: "He had just said Evensong (and the Nunc Dimittis) in the Cathedral, and was roaming round his garden when the stroke fell, and he never regained consciousness before his death in St. Richard's Hospital, Chichester." He was buried in the family grave in Bexhill Cemetery and many of his friends from St. Barnabas' attended the service. A requiem was also said for him in the Lady Chapel of St. Barnabas', the chapel which had been added with the south aisle when he was vicar.



CHAPTER

VI

GREAT DEARTH

1926-39

"And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world . . . Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa: which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

ACTS XI, verses 28-30

THE Rev. Basil Henry Davies was instituted at St. Barnabas' on 30th June 1926. He was a graduate of Lincoln College, Oxford and had served curacies at the churches of St. Mary, Newington, Surrey (1903-6), St. Mary, Esh, Co. Durham (1906-7), and St. Sepulchre, Northampton (1907-11). He was then vicar of St. Sepulchre's (1911-15) and was at the same time co-chaplain of Northampton General Hospital. He served in the R.A.F. (1917-19) and was vicar of St. Wenn (1916-21) and of Lodsworth, of which Prebendary Clarke had once been the incumbent, (1921-6). He was to remain at St. Barnabas' till 1940 and became Rural Dean of Battle and Bexhill in 1933 and an honorary canon of Chichester Cathedral in 1936. He was very interested in motoring, having been one of the pioneer motorists in the early days of the automobile, and devoted some of his time to journalism, on this and other subjects. He was, for instance, R. E. Davidson of the *New Statesman and Nation*, and Ixion of *Motor Cycling*,

It was inevitable that the new vicar should introduce some changes. He announced some of these at the church council meeting a month after his arrival, and asked if those who did not agree would express their opinions, but all his suggestions were agreed upon with very little discussion. Among the points mentioned were some slight alterations of the services. The 4 p.m. Litany was to be abolished, the Litany instead being said at Matins from time to time, the state prayers were to be shortened and more alternatives used, and the use of the sanctus bell and embroidered vestments was to be introduced at the Sung Eucharist. There were to be no changes at other celebrations of the Holy Communion, but Canon Davies thought that all who attended the Sung Eucharist would really prefer the full ritual and that the bell would be of value to those who were too sick to attend in body. For those who preferred simpler services, Matins and Evensong remained unchanged for the present and any changes made later would only be introduced after consultation with the church council.

It was Canon Davies who introduced the custom of a Midnight Mass at Christmas to St. Barnabas'. For many years the sacrament had been reserved at St. Barnabas' for the purpose of communicating the sick and under Canon Davies a proper aumbrey was constructed in the Lady chapel and a sanctuary lamp kept burning before it.

Despite these changes Canon Davies maintained that as the only church near the sea front and therefore the most likely to be frequented by visitors as well as the retired of all habits of churchmanship, St. Barnabas' must try in its various services to cater for all needs. Yet the following story entitled "Overheard in Sea Road", would indicate a new criterion for services being recognized by the laity.

"First young lady visitor: 'Is St. Barnabas' high or low?'

Bexhill young lady: ' Well, it isn't exactly low.'

Second young lady visitor: ' I don't care if it's high or low, so long as it's short. "

Against this standard St. Barnabas' apparently did offend from time to time, for on one occasion Canon Davies published an apology for a certain sermon as being much too long for a summer evening, " but he was not observing his watch closely enough to perceive it had stopped." The following month it was the curate's turn: " The Rev. C. G. G. Dean is rumoured to have preached for nigh on 30 minutes a few Sundays ago. We understand that the whole trouble was caused by the fact that neither he nor his watch stopped." Still perhaps the congregation was sometimes unduly fussy on this point: one visiting preacher complained that he did not mind people looking at their watches to see how long he had been preaching, but he did object when they held them to their ears to see if they had stopped! A sermon (to last only five minutes) was also introduced at the 9.40 (!) Sung Eucharist.

Canon Davies did not claim to be musical and preferred that Mr. Dean should always sing the Liturgy on Sunday mornings, and it was to Mr. Dean that congregational practices at Evensong to improve the general standard of singing were entrusted.

Most of the preceding paragraph was gleaned from contemporary parish magazines, from which may be gathered something of how the magazine had fared in the hands of a journalist. Not only was the whole tone much lighter than in Canon Mortlock's day, but the material was more arrestingly arranged, with many sub-titles in darker type. The St. Barnabas' contribution was much longer than previously and also reported decisions of the church council which affected the whole parish.

On taking up the reins of the parish Canon Davies was horror-struck to find that its quota to the diocesan fund

had not been paid in full, although there were handsome credit balances in many of the church accounts. He was also very distressed at the small support given to foreign missions, which would not seem to have extended much beyond parcels of clothing, etc., to a parish in Newfoundland.

To remedy this state of affairs he suggested that a lump sum from the existing balances should immediately be paid to foreign missions and the diocesan fund, and that the diocesan quota should in future be paid in full. A sub-committee was also set up to consider the organization of missionary work in the parish. Another sub-committee was appointed to report on the work amongst young people. Canon Davies hoped that it would even be possible to have some younger people on the P.C.C.

His opinions on this matter were much mis-represented and he was finally driven to publish a long explanation of his views: he did not undervalue the middle-aged and older members of his parish, but he did feel they needed leavening with some of the enthusiasm of youth and that it was especially necessary to make efforts to do this in view of the high average age of the population of the town. Despite this explanation one old gentleman was overheard to say: "I think that is a very dangerous idea of the Vicar's, to flood the parochial church council with babies." Another way in which the vicar tried to improve the lot of the younger members of the congregation was to arrange that the schools who attended services should be seated where they could see and not in the most distant and inconvenient parts of the church as had previously been the case.

Despite all his endeavours, Canon Davies was still complaining of the starchiness of his congregations in 1934. Why did people who met regularly in church never acknowledge each other's presence by so much as a quiet smile? Another disproportion which grieved the Canon

was that between men and women. He was aware that out of every hundred inhabitants probably eighty were women, but the proportion of men at church services was well below 20 per cent. Fortunately this lament was not so misunderstood as that about the different age-groups; there is no record of women worshippers complaining of a scheme to flood the church with men !

Most of the organizations connected with St. Barnabas' continued unperturbed by the arrival of the new vicar, but very early in his work the C.L.B., which had for some time been without an officer and practically defunct, was definitely closed down. In its place a troop of scouts was started, and cubs were soon added to these.

A change that was not felt only by the parish of St. Barnabas' nor introduced by its new vicar was that brought about by the general slump in the 1930s. Even in Bexhill its effects were felt and produced a considerable number of unemployed and some cases of undernourishment. To meet this the Bexhill Unemployed Guild was founded and the various churches contributed to its funds. Nevertheless Bexhill was comparatively lightly affected by the bad conditions, for only 10 per cent. of the insured workers were unemployed and there were many well-to-do folk in the town who could afford to help. The same was true of most of Sussex and consequently the Bishop of Chichester (by now Dr. Bell) suggested that parishes here should "adopt" parishes in the distressed areas of Wales or the North. Towards the end of 1932 St. Barnabas' therefore "adopted" the parish of St. John the Baptist, Stockton-on-Tees, and this relationship between the two parishes continued steadily up to the out-break of war.

Stockton was a purely artisan area with rather more than 65 per cent. of its adult population out of work, and the remaining 35 per cent. on low wages and in none too certain employment. Gifts of money and clothing were sent through the years from St. Barnabas', a large part of

collections on Christmas Day frequently being allocated to this purpose. The vicar of St. John's expressed his gratitude by letter and also came to preach at St. Barnabas' on more than one occasion. On his first visit in 1933 he is said to have won all hearts with his simple tales of courage and distress, and gifts continued to flow in, although already a hundred guineas in cash and several tons of really good clothing had been sent.

Some of those who gave the money hoped it would be spent on food, but at Stockton it was felt that it would not go far in feeding 10,000 mouths. Also a soup kitchen and food centre operated by public funds had by now been established at St. John's Schools. It was therefore decided to spend the money on building a recreation room for the unemployed, as the men got under their wives' feet during their enforced idleness in their cramped homes. Even before it was opened St. Barnabas' Hall, as it was called, served a useful purpose, for the unemployed built it themselves with materials bought cheaply from the dismantled shipbuilding works on Tees-side. After it was open St. Barnabas' also helped by sending on their magazines, *Punch*, *Sphere*, etc., for the reading room.

By the end of 1933 there was a slight promise of improvement at Stockton, when the I.C.I. erected a plant for refining petrol at Billingham, near Stockton, which absorbed some of the surplus labour in the area. 50 per cent. were even so still unemployed in 1936 when Canon Davies had cause to complain about ridiculous statements being circulated to the effect that St. Barnabas' people had sent up enough clothes to clothe the entire population of Stockton ten times over. In reply he pointed out that Stockton was a borough more than three times the size of Bexhill and that in St. John's parish alone there were still 6,000 unemployed. Any unemployed household entirely dependant on public maintenance and spending all its allowances on rent, food and

light, would still remain undernourished and have nothing at all to spend on clothes or boots. All that St. Barnabas' could do in the face of such conditions, unimaginable to those living safely in Bexhill, was still pitifully little.

These uninformed rumours would seem to have been effectively squashed for in 1938 the carriage of clothing by rail to St. John's alone amounted to over £15 for the year. Some effort to bring home conditions in the north to those at St. Barnabas' was made by showing a film of life at Stockton in the church.

It was a firm conviction with Canon Davies that a church without any missionary activity would soon be a dead church. Nor was he only concerned that the parish should support missions by gifts of money and regular prayer from home. He wanted young people to go out from the parish to the mission field. The very nature of the population of Bexhill and in particular of the parish of St. Barnabas' made this ambition difficult of realization. To a very large extent the town consisted of a floating population. In fact in 1936 the vicar pointed out that of those whom he had prepared for confirmation in the past nine years only 5 per cent. were still in the town. The entire congregation of St. Barnabas' had also completely changed during the past five years, although numbers had remained approximately the same. The number of young people in the town was small as there was little work for them and most of the families with children had moved out of the parish to the new housing estate at Sidley.

These facts combined to make it difficult to find recruits for the mission field, and any interest in missions was slow in awakening. However both Canon Davies and Mr. Dean continued to preach on the subject from time to time and gradually their words took effect, though not always in such dramatic form as the letter received by Mr. Dean after one of his sermons.

“ Dear Dean,

I knew that the skipper was balmy about missions, but now that you have got it too, there must be something in it. I have been a churchman all my life, but have never before sent a subscription to missions. However, here's ten bob.”

Soon the volunteers came too. First came two young men of the congregation, George Eagling and Bernard Hughes, who decided, if not to go to the mission field, at least to take holy orders. George Eagling has in fact been working for the S.P.G. in Bangkok, diocese of Singapore, since 1936. Early in 1929 Miss Phylliss Dillistone went out under the C.M.S., and at the same time the vicar was able to report that two young women communicants from the parish were in training for missionary hospitals and a third was soon to join them* Two young men were also hoping to put in five years overseas.

By the early 1930s a regular item in the church accounts was “ Ordination Fund ” from which young men, not necessarily from this parish, were given financial assistance in their studies before taking holy orders. In 1936 a former server at St. Barnabas', John Grinstead, was ordained. By now two more women were also facing up to the possibility of a call to missionary work.

Meanwhile there remained the need for much work and money within the parish of St. Barnabas'. The west wall of the church was gradually being destroyed by damp. It was always dripping inside after quite mild rain and in winter its condition was terrible. The problem was how best to treat it. Experts differed in their diagnosis: one suggested limewashing the outside of the wall every two or three years, others spraying the outside with some patented waterproof. To settle this dispute a couple of trial holes were cut through the brick casing from the

*Unfortunately Miss Dillistone had to return to this country in 1935 owing to ill-health.

inside of the church and this provided the necessary information. The inner brick casing was only one brick thick and the space between this and the outer case of flints embedded in concrete was filled in with rather second-rate concrete, which was so porous that any water entering the wall high up could filter down through it. The solution was therefore to strengthen the weak places on the outside through which the water entered. This was done by T. L. McCormick.

The Free Will Offering fund naturally suffered in these difficult years and various suggestions were made as to how to encourage people to contribute. The vicar cited the case of a similar fund at St. Agnes', Kennington Park where "the vicar appointed a pensioned serjeant-major to wake it up. A few days later he received a cheque from a defaulting subscriber, who, in a covering letter, remarked: '... but please tell your worthy secretary that blighter is spelt with a "gh", and that there is only one "r" in perishing.'" The secretary of the St. Barnabas' Free Will Offering, at that time Mr. G. Pitman, expressed his willingness to hand over the work to any ex-serjeant-major in the town who was willing to undertake it. No such volunteer, however, was forthcoming, and a few years later the church treasurer, Mr. Mallinson, was so worried about the increasing deficit on church accounts that the vicar took up his cudgels in the pulpit and stated that: "1,000 people make use of St. Barnabas' on an average Sunday. 115 of them belong to the Free Will scheme. If 50 more joined at sixpence a week, the church expense account would be about solvent."

Within seven days forty-five more members had joined, some of them having previously held aloof because they felt ashamed to offer so small a sum as sixpence weekly.

During these years Evensong was twice broadcast from St. Barnabas' and on the first occasion Canon Davies was amazed at the size of the ensuing fan-mail. Of the letters he received five (all anonymous and none of them

from Bexhill) were abusive, four objecting to prayers for the dead, and the last, signed "Grandmother of 10", considering the address idiotic, but the other 112 were appreciative, so the vicar was not seriously perturbed.*

The tradition of support for the nursing association was continued. Nurse Cave had worked for a short time under the Bexhill Nursing Association when it was first formed, but she had resigned as she considered her district too large for efficiency. Canon Mortlock then persuaded her to act as mission worker in St. Barnabas' parish, which she did until the end of 1927 when she felt compelled to retire for reasons of age and health. She continued to live in Bexhill until her death in 1946.

Canon Davies himself is remembered by many of the permanent invalids for his faithful and frequent visiting and for the regularity with which he brought them their Communion.

Another tradition which Canon Davies continued was that of drawing the attention of his people to national questions involving moral or ecclesiastical issues, as, for example, birth control, disarmament, and the Prayer Book measure.

*A third broadcast took place on the Sunday before the diamond jubilee.

CHAPTER

VII

FOREVER BUILDING

1926-39

"The Church must be forever building, for it is forever decaying within and attacked from without;
"For this is the law of life."

T. S. ELIOT—*The Rock*

WHEN the commission appointed by the diocese made its report suggesting the building of new churches at the west end of Bexhill, it emphasised the desirability of these being independent districts as soon as possible. The very nearness of St. Andrew's to St. Barnabas' was an impediment to its becoming the parish church of a separate parish. St. Andrew's would indeed be in the new district when a division was made, but a new church would also have to be built further west. By law no new parish can be formed until it possesses a permanent church, but an area can become virtually independent even with only a temporary church when it is legally known as a conventional district. The priest of a conventional district is appointed by the Bishop and is responsible only to him (not to the vicar of the "mother" church) and he is advised by his own church council. As it seemed unlikely that a new permanent church could be built very quickly it was at first decided that the West Bexhill Church should be a temporary building and that a conventional district should be formed at that end of the town. However, before this temporary church was built the diocese

had a new bishop who decided it would be wiser to build a permanent church, even if it meant erecting the building piecemeal.

While these negotiations were proceeding St. Andrew's was receiving more and more "illegal" independence. Although as a mere daughter church it could not have a legal P.C.C. and churchwardens of its own, a special sub-committee of St. Andrew's people on St. Barnabas' P.C.C. was formed, and this sub-committee had charge of all financial matters pertaining to St. Andrew's, though it was responsible to the parent church council.

At this time the curate in charge of St. Andrew's was Noel E. C. Hemsworth and when early in 1929 he left the town St. Andrew's asked if the other curate at St. Barnabas', the Rev. C. G. G. Dean, could fill his place and thus in time become the first priest legally in charge of the West Bexhill district. It was arranged that this should be done and for a short while Mr. Dean did transfer his work to the west end of the town, but unfortunately, before he had even moved into the new parsonage bought by St. Andrew's, he died suddenly and unexpectedly, leaving a widow and young children. Mr. Dean was buried from St. Barnabas' Church as St. Andrew's was too small to hold all who wished to attend. That year the Whitsun offering, which had for some years past been divided among the assistant clergy of the parish, was instead used to provide a pension fund for his widow, and contributions from the two churches amounted to almost £600.

At this time it was still intended to build a temporary church, which could afterwards be used as a hall and there was some suggestion of naming it the Dean Memorial Hall, but after consideration it was abandoned on the grounds that while the building served as a church the name would imply ranking Mr. Dean among the saints, and that once it was a mere hall it would no longer be a worthy memorial.

The next priest appointed to St. Andrew's was the Rev. Harold Augustine Thomas who did in fact remain to be its first official priest-in-charge. On his suggestion it was decided to dedicate the new church in the name of St. Augustine of Canterbury. Mr. Dean was eventually commemorated by the priest's chair in the All Souls' chapel at St. Barnabas'.

Another matter on which different decisions were reached as the years passed was that of a site for the new church. Eventually the original position in Terminus Avenue was abandoned and the land sold in order to buy one of two possible sites near Cooden Drive. Once the purchase of this site was completed the church council felt in a position to ask the architect suggested by the Diocese, Mr. W. H. R. Blacking, to draw up plans for a church. There were some difficulties in the site chosen, both because it had been trenched during the war, and because the owner-occupiers of some of the neighbouring houses felt the erection of a church would infringe the rights of the whole area, but these were finally overcome.

The chief difficulty was now one of money. This time there was no one wealthy donor who could subscribe the bulk of the funds in one gift, as had been the case with all the older churches in the town. Like his predecessor Canon Davies was opposed to raising money through bazaars, both because of the unsound principle underlying them and because they were unpopular with the local tradespeople. He quoted the instance, during the preparation for the last bazaar at St. Andrew's, of one local tradesman who was asked by fourteen of his customers to give some article for a stall. "He gave to them all; but when another woman asked him, he refused: and she has not dealt with him since. This, of course, is simply a species of blackmail, and Christians have no right to practise it."

To avoid such occurrences Canon Davies resolved to rely on direct giving and introduced the system of paper

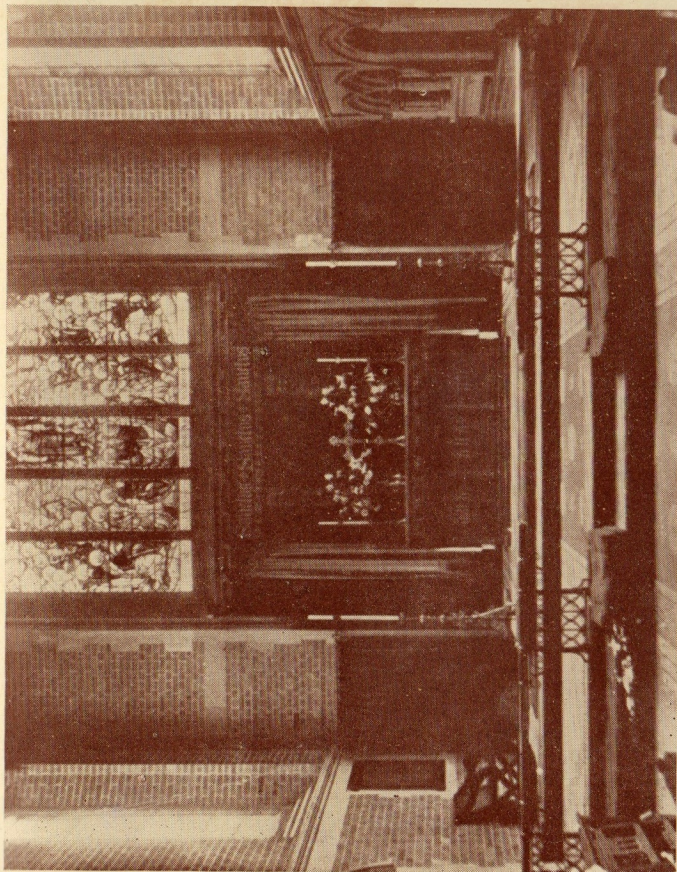
collections, which he had previously used with success in an artisan congregation. About six months' notice was given before such a collection and when the day came, all were asked to place some form of paper money, whether notes or a postal order, in an envelope and give it through the church collections. This idea was approved by the council, although some people regarded it as the simplest and surest way of emptying a church. Yet it succeeded beyond even the vicar's wildest hopes, and collections at the two churches on 13th October 1929 exceeded £2,000.

The experiment was repeated before the existing section of St. Augustine's was completed and though the combined effects of repetition and the slump were to prevent such an immense total being reached again on any one day, yet the money was raised, step by step, by this method.

The boundary of the West Bexhill district on the east was an imaginary line down the middle of Sackville Road and on the west the parish of St. Mark, Little Common. West Bexhill became a conventional district from the beginning of 1931 and was thereafter legally independent of St. Barnabas'. In actual fact the mother church continued to take a close interest in its welfare and to assist in raising the money necessary to build and endow the permanent church, so that it might become a separate parish. The establishment of a conventional district automatically involved a complete revision of the electoral roll and the transference of the site of the new church from St. Barnabas' to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who henceforward provided the stipend of an assistant curate in the new district. The chancel and first bay of the nave of St. Augustine's were built in a comparatively short space of time and the church was consecrated on 29th April 1934. On 29th June that year the new parish of St. Augustine was duly constituted by an Order in Council.

Great things were expected of the new parish. "It is quite probable," wrote Canon Davies in 1933, "that in twenty years' time St. Augustine will be the leading church of Bexhill. It will be situated amidst wholly modern properties and form a fine block when all the housing sites around it are built over, and the central island is laid out with vicarage, hall, gardens and sexton's house. We hope it will be served by a succession of faithful priests and exert a profound influence on the leading citizens of Bexhill in the next generation, when St. Peter and Barnabas may have shrunk to suburban churches, surrounded by old-fashioned properties." Fascinating as it would be to trace why this prophecy was not fully realized, the history of the parish of West Bexhill after 1934 does not lie within the scope of this booklet.

The division had left the parish of St. Barnabas' hardly any poor and few children within its boundaries. It was a situation, Canon Davies foresaw, fraught with danger, "the danger of St. Barnabas' becoming a parish with a large percentage of retired people wanting to have the kind of services they liked, the sort of parson they liked, voicing their pet prejudices." To avert this danger the vicar insisted that they should take responsibility for the young people from elsewhere who worked in their parish, and that for the benefit of these they should no longer delay in building a parish hall. It had already been decided in 1931 that the most suitable site for such a building would be the vicarage kitchen garden, on the corner of Cantelupe Road and Brassey Road. Even after the consecration of St. Augustine's no urgent appeal for funds was issued as the new parish was then still in need of help, but the kitchen garden site was legally transferred to the Chichester Diocesan Fund, earmarked for the erection of a parish hall, and there was already £600 in hand for the building fund. The need for a hall was rendered the more pressing by the fact that the Victoria



The sanctuary before refurbishing

Photo from an old print

D. R. Miller



The chancel, showing new reredos

Photo

R. D. Miller

Road site had been sold in 1927, though the new owners had been kind enough to allow some church organizations to continue meeting on the premises there for another year free of charge. The hall, however, was still to remain a castle in the air.

Before even the foundations of St. Augustine's had been laid, another small building had been erected on the land near St. Barnabas' Church, on the Sea Road frontage of the vicarage garden. The building of a curate's house was in the first place Canon Davies' idea, but it was warmly supported by the P.C.C. and half the cost of the house was provided by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. This gift by the Commissioners was conditional upon the house being of a certain standard, and there were some in the parish who felt that it was an unnecessarily high one, and that indeed the whole plan of building such a house was an extravagance. There was some difficulty in finding a suitable name to indicate at once that the house was connected with St. Barnabas', that a priest lived there and that it was neither a vicarage nor a clergy house: but when it was built it was known as St. Barnabas' Lodge.

The first fortunate curate to live in the Lodge was Mr. Dean, affectionately known as "Tubby", and there was some jesting as to whether he would be able to fit into his study without the aid of a shoehorn, so small did that room appear on the ground-plan. The P.C.C. remained unperturbed by criticisms and jests alike. While grateful for subscriptions towards the cost of the house, they knew it could in time be trusted to pay for itself out of rent so there was no danger of financial loss and they could pride themselves that "they have accomplished a very good stroke of business, as the result of which the parish will benefit for many a long year."

The Lodge stands well back from the road and is so concealed from view that even the 1951 census overlooked it. From the outside it appears small, but in fact

it contains eight rooms and every inch of space has been used to the greatest advantage. It must be the finest curate's house in the diocese and Mr. Dean was certainly not the last curate to say: "Words fail me to describe the outlook from the inside; the brightness, the comforts and the conveniences cause me truly to say that I have never been more comfortably housed in my life." On the Friday of Easter Week in 1928 the Lodge was blessed by the Bishop of Lewes.

Up to this stage in the history of the parish there had been successive needs for money for utilitarian purposes, such as the schools, mission chapel and houses for the clergy. At last, early in the 1930s, the absence of any such pressing need made it possible for something to be done towards the beautification of the church. True the first incentive to do something in this direction was one of pure need: the sacristan had reported that the hangings on the east wall were dropping to pieces and must be replaced in some form or other. The vicar therefore asked Leslie Moore, F.R.I.B.A., to visit the church and give his advice. The architect strongly advised against buying new hangings, which would themselves need replacing in a few years. Instead he suggested a more permanent decoration for the east wall in the form of a carved oak reredos in gold and colour. He also advised that the small and badly proportioned altar should be replaced by a larger altar in oak, which would mean replacing the old threadbare frontals by larger ones. He criticized as being bad taste the brass rail and the mosaic paving in the sanctuary and suggested replacing them respectively by an oak rail and plain stone paving. To make the administration of the Communion more convenient he recommended some alteration in the levels and steps in the sanctuary.

Generally speaking these ideas were accepted by the church council and the Sanctuary Beautification Fund was launched. As in the case of St. Augustine's it was decided

to rely on direct giving through paper collections, and to encourage interest letters explaining the scheme and showing a plan of the proposed new sanctuary were printed and circulated. As a further incentive the old hangings were removed and the wall left bare to remind worshippers of the need. Although only the redecoration of the east wall was urgently necessary it was wisely decided that it was best to carry out all the alterations at the same time and not alter the sanctuary piecemeal. It was, however, decided to defer moving the console of the organ to the south side of the chancel both on account of the expense involved and because the organist was opposed to it. An electric conduit was laid under the new steps to take the cables when the console should be moved. The old altar and standard candlesticks were given to the Sub-Deanery Church of Chichester of which Canon Mortlock was then vicar.

Despite the slump, money for these alterations was soon forthcoming, £700 on the first gift day and £400 on the second. In the leaflet prior to the second gift day it was stated that if the money was raised on the day named workmen would start to instal the rest of the work the same week, but that if not the congregation would have to worship in an unfinished sanctuary until the money was available. It is not suprising after such an appeal that the alterations were finished on time and the new reredos blessed by the Bishop of Lewes as arranged on 26th July 1936. For a detailed description of the reredos, which adds so greatly to the beauty of the church, see chapter XI.

Only after the alterations had been made was it realized that the remaining mosaic between the choir-stalls would present an unpleasing contrast to the new sanctuary.

In a parish composed so largely of boarding houses, hotels and nursing homes, the problem of where coffins should rest while awaiting burial was one that frequently

arose. Mr. Poulton suggested that it might be possible to convert the baptistery into a chapel of All Souls' and that this chapel would both provide a resting place for coffins and would be more suitable than the huge church for funerals where only a few mourners were present. The architect, Mr. Leslie Moore, drew up plans by which this could be done, but they were rejected by the Ministry of Health and the scheme was temporarily dropped. The next suggestion was that the south porch might be converted into a mortuary, and again plans were prepared. Finally this scheme in turn was abandoned and it was decided instead to convert the baptistery by sealing it with a separate roof.

This amended scheme was far more costly than the original plan, but did gain a certificate from the Health authorities and was therefore adopted. The cost of the work was borrowed from parish investments and gradually repaid from the fees of the chapel. As the only other mortuary was that in the hospital, the new chapel was of use to other parishes besides St. Barnabas'. The work was carried out by Messrs. Bainbridge of Eastbourne and the furnishings were given by worshippers as memorials to dead friends and relations.

As thirty people would crowd the little chapel no public service of dedication was held, but it was dedicated by a requiem early in 1939. The vicar celebrated and Mr. Poulton, the originator of the scheme, served. Members of the church council which had sponsored the idea the preceding year and those who had contributed articles of furniture were also invited to be present.

In 1935 the vicar started to prepare the minds' of the congregation for a scheme which he guessed would be unpopular, namely the selling of the vicarage. He pointed out that houses of a similar size elsewhere in the town had proved unlettable for the simple reason that no business man with an income of less than £3,000 per annum would

dream of living in such a house. In the past some clergy had been able to maintain such vicarages out of their private means or their wives' money, but as fewer and fewer candidates for the sacred ministry came from well-to-do families it was unlikely that St. Barnabas' would continue to find vicars who could afford to live in the vicarage. He himself could only do so because he was able to supplement his income by his pen.

As Canon Davies feared, the idea was very slow in winning general approval and his scheme of a small house built on the west end of the tennis court remained a day-dream. With the coming of the war, however, Canon Davies' income from journalism was considerably reduced and he was therefore no longer able to spend the £300 needed annually for the luxury of inhabiting a large fifteen-roomed house. Permission was obtained from the Bishop for the vicar to move out of the vicarage, and for the vicarage to be sold after the war when a reasonable price could be obtained. In the meantime Canon Davies lived in an hotel in the parish and had an office over the Westminster Bank.

The small war shrine in the churchyard also came in for criticism during the thirties. Although it had been given by a private individual, Mrs. Eastty, its position made it look as though it were the memorial erected by the whole congregation. For this larger purpose it was completely inadequate because it did not record a tenth of the names of those from the parish who had died in the war. It also looked cheap, being painted wood, but was expensive to maintain because it needed repainting annually.

After some years of discussion it was finally decided to replace the weather-worn plaster figure of Christ by one of metal, and the inaccurate list of the fallen by a metal plate bearing the inscription: "1914-1918. In proud and loving memory of those who once worshipped in this

church and having given their lives for king and country now worship on another shore and in a clearer light." Even before this memorial had been completed war had broken out, this time to affect St. Barnabas' far more closely.



CHAPTER
VIII
FLYING MONSTERS

1939-43

AT first it seemed as though the events of 1914-18 would be repeated, at least as far as Bexhill was concerned. The times of services had to be altered at St. Barnabas' as the church remained as difficult to black-out as previously and there was also the need to fit in a church parade. Through the first winter the church was used intensively in daylight hours each Sunday:

Holy Communion	8. 0 a.m.
Military church parade	9.30 a.m.
Sung Eucharist	10.15 a.m.
Matins	11.30 a.m.
Children	2.30 p.m.
Evensong	3.30 p.m.

The midnight mass at Christmas had to be dropped, as did any celebrations earlier than 8 a.m., except when they were held in the chapel of All Souls. This last arrangement however, was soon abandoned, as it meant diverting the chapel from its intended use as a mortuary. Instead the Lady chapel was blacked-out and weekday services held there. Once again most of the young servers disappeared into the forces and the choir was also depleted, but this time no list of names of those on active service was read out in church. The reason for this was that long strings of names became monotonous and meaningless and also it was difficult to know whether to include civilians such as A.R.P. wardens, who might be

serving in danger. Instead, all the names of those serving were inscribed in a large book which lay on the altar throughout the war. Another difference was that it was pointed out that the two most common prayers in the earlier war, those for victory and those for the safety of one's own family, were both more selfish than Christian.

In 1939 Bexhill was regarded as a safe area and London children were evacuated to the town in such numbers that it became necessary for them and the local children to use the school buildings for half of the day each. In common with other churches St. Barnabas' offered what help it could in providing an occupational centre during the other half of the day, and in the absence of a church hall the lower vestry was used for this purpose. The vestry was not only blacked-out so that it could be used at all hours, but also reinforced so that it could serve as a shelter in the event of an air-raid although "the P.C.C. consider the chance of bombs on Bexhill as more than remote." In the "unlikely event" of an alert during service hours all were asked to remain in their seats for one minute to allow A.R.P. workers to go to their posts, and then those who could not reach home within six minutes were invited to take shelter in the underground vestries, which could provide comfortable seating for 150 people.

Early in 1940 the parish began to plan for its coming jubilee: "St. Barnabas' Church was consecrated on 15th July 1891, and will, therefore, complete its jubilee next year. This will, in any case, be observed by an octave of special services and preachers. We shall hope to overcome Canon Mortlock's modesty for once, and persuade him to come and speak to us; and both our Bishops must be invited in good time. Some of the enthusiasts in the congregation moved quite expensive schemes as fit commemorations, but that was before war broke out. If the war ends before next summer, more may be heard of some of them. They included the completion of the sanctuary; the repair of the organ, including moving the

console; subscribing a large capital sum for foreign missions; subscribing a large capital sum for church extension in Sussex; and building a parish hall on the present site of the vicarage kitchen garden."

Hopes were still high in April 1940, but in the following months the vicar was to note in the church register: "The exodus from Bexhill due to the German armies over-running the Low Countries commenced this week and gathered impetus gradually, reaching its peak about the end of June." "A steady exodus of well-to-do residents commenced about this date." "Both July 7 and 14 were fine Sundays. The drop in congregations was due to the war exodus." "1,020 local children from elementary schools evacuated into Herts."

Such entries briefly tell the tale of those summer months, more fully described in the parish magazines. The exodus was particularly great from the south end of the town, with the result that St. Barnabas' was greatly impoverished and very reluctantly decided they could no longer afford an assistant curate. Nor was there any longer any question of air-raids being unlikely. It was now decided to empty the church as quickly as possible in the event of a warning, for the danger from flying glass had been realized. The chapel of All Souls and the lower vestries were still regarded as reasonably safe, though not as ideal a shelter as the cellars under Style and Winch's premises on the opposite side of Sea Road. By September matters were really becoming serious and there was heavy bombing in the parish. No words written in 1951 can describe the situation as graphically as the notes made in the parish minute book at the time by Mr. Poulton:

"After the Maginot Line had been turned, the Germans rapidly over-ran the greater part of Northern Europe. When France capitulated and the Germans had possession of the Channel ports there was an immediate danger to this country of violent air-raids and of an

attempted invasion. The school children which had been received in Bexhill from London were re-evacuated, and on Sunday 21st July, 45 per cent. of the local school children were evacuated to Letchworth and St. Albans. London was subjected to constant and violent bombing, but Bexhill escaped until September, since when it has been repeatedly bombed! On the night of Saturday September 7-8 the Germans started their so-called 'Blitz' intending to destroy our Air Force and to invade this country at the full moon on September 16th. It didn't come off thanks to the Almighty and the R.A.F. The authorities called for a voluntary evacuation of the population of S.E. coastal towns and for a week special trains took people from Bexhill to Wilts and Shropshire. The resignation of Canon B. H. Davies as Vicar took effect as from September 30th. . . .

"From this time the attendance at church services dropped to vanishing point, and the collections were quite inadequate to cover expenses. Many services were cancelled by the sounding of the siren a short time before the service should have commenced. Fr. Aspy carried on manfully, but the choir disappeared, and ladies very kindly took its place.

"On Wednesday, October 23rd, the Wardens and the Secretary met the Archdeacon and the Rural Dean to discuss the future of St. Barnabas'.

"On Tuesday, October 29th, the Standing Committee met to discuss report of interview with the Archdeacon and to formulate a suggested policy to submit to the Bishop.

On Monday, November 4th, the Bishop met the Wardens and Secretary in the Vestry of St. Barnabas'. The Bishop was extremely sympathetic and helpful, and the meeting was highly satisfactory. The following emerges:

- 1 The Bishop appointed the two wardens as sequestrators.

2. He approved Fr. Aspy as Priest-in-charge but intimated that the arrangement would cease if/when Fr. Aspy accepted another appointment.
3. The Bishop said he did not propose to appoint a new Vicar until after the war, unless the Wardens could convince him that it would be in the best interests of the Parish to do so.
4. He suggested that it might be well to close the church, except for private devotions, if Fr. Aspy left."

The Rev. F. C. Aspy, the curate who shortly before had been warned that St. Barnabas' could not afford to keep him, expressed his willingness to remain as priest-in-charge, but barely a month had passed after the Bishop and wardens had met, before Mr. Aspy was offered and accepted the benefice of St. James', Littlehampton. From the beginning of 1941 St. Barnabas' was without any resident priest.

The wardens, Mr. Granger and Mr. Humphrys, as sequestrators, were responsible as trustees for the next vicar for the stipend of the living and were forced by law to provide for the services in the church in the meanwhile. This was no easy task for almost the only clergy left in the town were those responsible for the other churches, and in terms of cash the bare minimum on which the church could be kept open without running into debt was £5 a week. Their financial difficulties were increased by the fact that Canon Davies had retired owing to ill health when he left the parish and was therefore entitled to a third of the living as a pension.

From now on the rector of the parish church, at this time the Rev. H. B. W. Denison, had to help in providing clergy to take the services at all the churches south of the railway line, for St. Augustine's too was without a vicar. Under such circumstances it was naturally impossible for each church to have the number of services to

which its people had formerly been accustomed. It was decided that St. Barnabas' could only afford three services a Sunday. These always included an early Celebration and Evensong, while at one time there was a Sung Eucharist each week and at another Sung Eucharist and sung Matins on alternate Sundays. At this time the south end of the town was largely evacuated and the congregations, even when undisturbed by alerts, were small. Mr. Thorne, after twenty-five years as organist, retired for reasons of age and health, and Mr. Ronald Sheather, as honorary organist, kept together a choir composed of a number of ladies, one man and one boy.

At the annual church meeting in 1941 the main subject under discussion was, not how best to celebrate the jubilee of the parish, but how to continue to keep the church open. The weekly income of the church had now sunk to about £4. 10s., which just enabled them to have a credit balance after paying their diocesan quota in full, but they saw little hope of being able to do so again. Despite some damage to the windows from bombs in Sea Road, the church fabric and furniture were in good order. Thus St. Barnabas' passed through its jubilee year without parish priest, organist, choir or vergers, with few church officers and a congregation of about forty. Yet it did not have to close: those few who were left defended their right to worship in their own church, and by the end of 1941 the worst was over.

Very gradually people began to come back into the town. The new rector, Canon Godfrey Bell, appointed the Rev. R. Tremellen as priest-in-charge of St. Barnabas', although he had some other duties and remained on the staff of the parish church. The Lodge, which had been slightly damaged while it was empty due to bombs having fallen in Sea Road, was repaired and Mr. Tremellen took up his residence there early in 1942.

Under his leadership parish life was gradually re-established. Weekday services were no longer limited to

a celebration on Wednesdays, the choir increased sufficiently to produce Stainer's *Crucifixion* on Good Friday, a discussion group was started and a list of children in the parish was made as a preliminary to starting a Sunday school. This last hope, however, was not realized, as there were still too few children in the district. Residents began to feel that normal life could now start again in Bexhill and there was some resentment that coastal towns were under a ban as far as holiday makers were concerned, which continued to deprive the hotel keepers and landladies of their livelihood.

Then, just as things were beginning to look better, came a sharp early morning raid one Saturday morning in May. Of the stick of bombs which fell across the town one completely demolished the large and fortunately unoccupied vicarage of St. Barnabas'. Those few who saw the occurrence report that the house collapsed like a house of cards, having apparently been hit in the absolute centre. The only part left standing, and that only precariously, was the back addition of the kitchen, scullery and store premises.

Spectacular as was the complete and sudden destruction of the vicarage, it was perhaps less of a tragedy that it might have appeared to the casual spectator had there been one about at the time. It had long since been decided that it would be wisest to sell the vicarage as soon as possible, and in the meanwhile the sequestrators were liable for heavy contributions, known as dilapidations, towards its upkeep.

Of more immediate concern to those in the town, was the state of the two other buildings. The back of the Lodge was severely damaged, for most of its roof had gone and the steel framed windows were wrenched from their hinges and lay twisted among dislodged bricks and splintered timber. Mr. and Mrs. Tremellen, their son, and mother's "help" were all asleep at the time, and woken by the sound of a diving plane. When the bomb

fell the house was full of plaster-dust and the doors were jammed by the blast so that outside help was needed before they could leave the house. Not surprisingly Mrs. Tremellen left the town with her son and "help" for a short rest to recover from the shock, but Mr. Tremellen remained and shortly afterwards moved to Jameson Road. Not long after his family had rejoined him there that road suffered in another raid and the house next door to his was destroyed.

The church, too, suffered considerable damage from the bomb which hit the vicarage. Most of the windows on the south side of the church were blown in, including four memorial windows of stained glass, and the clerestory windows above the main aisle were also rendered glassless. A squad of soldiers and many of those resident in the parish worked hard all through the day to clear the debris so that it was possible to hold services in the church the following day. In such a short time little could be done to replace the windows and the least breeze on the Sunday wafted clouds of dust across from the south aisle over the worshippers.

Despite the reinforcements which had been made to the lower vestry and the blast walls protecting its windows, not a single pane of glass there was left in its frame and the cupboard doors were blown from their hinges and split to matchwood. By the end of the month "first-aid" had been rendered to the gaping window frames and the diocesan architect and surveyor had reported that the structure of the church and lodge was undamaged; windows, roofs, doors and other fittings would be repaired or replaced.

The parish settled back into its ordinary wartime existence. Confirmation classes were started again, and preparation made for a "Religion and Life" week held in the town in the autumn. But in the winter of 1942-3 the life of the parish of St. Barnabas' suffered a further interruption. The Bishop felt it was time that

Mr. Tremellen should have an independent charge of his own, and finally, although he was reluctant to leave Bexhill despite the number of houses he had been bombed out of, he accepted the rectory of Dallington and moved there in the spring of 1943. At this time the Bishop had hoped it would soon be possible to appoint a vicar to St. Barnabas' again. Unfortunately it was several months before anyone suitable could be found and in the meanwhile the parish remained in the care of the sequestrators and the rector. The "gentleman's agreement" that wardens should not hold office for more than three years, was waived during this war period so that the sequestrators might remain the same and ensure some continuity in the direction of the parish. Once again the parish register bears witness to a bewildering number of different priests who helped by taking the various services at St. Barnabas', and entries such as "services cancelled owing to mine at the bottom of Sea Road" continue to appear.

It was another difficult year for the parish, but was at least an improvement on 1940-1 in that the congregations were increasing, and there were a larger number of laymen and women to share in the responsibility for and care of the church. Yet still there was scarcely a child living south of the railway line and only about three of the houses in Sea Road were occupied. When the new vicar came he found barely a dozen communicants at each of the two services on his first Sunday.



CHAPTER

IX

ATHENA UNHELMETED

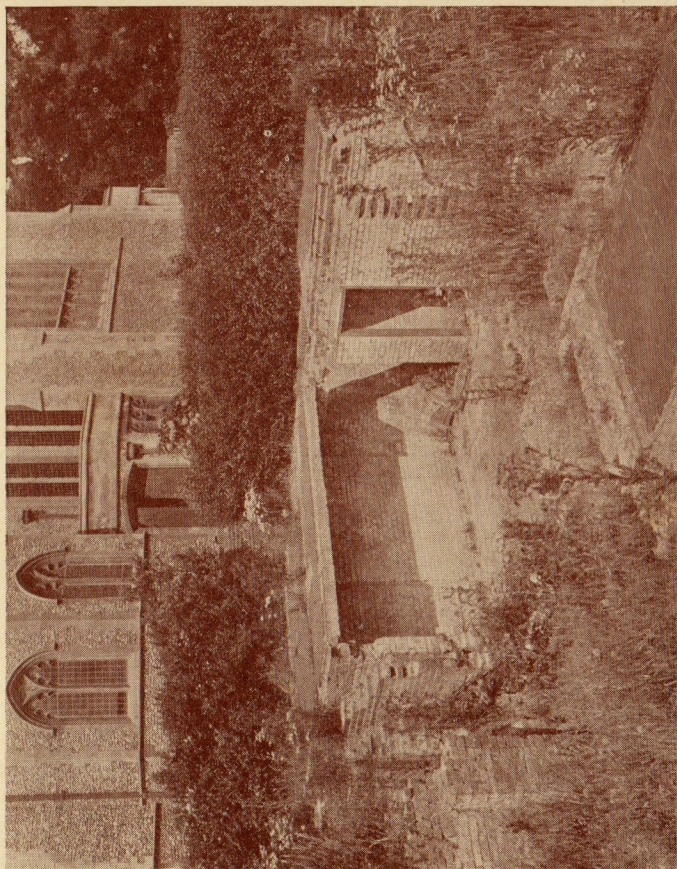
1943-51

" See with how placid mein Athena unhelmeted
re-entering hath possess'd her desolate halls."

BRIDGES—*Testament of Beauty*

OWING to the long interval which war-time conditions had imposed between Canon Davies' resignation and the appointment of a successor, the presentation of the living, for this time only, had reverted first to the Archbishop and then to the King. The first notice most parishioners saw about the new incumbent was therefore the statement in the *Bexhill Observer* that the Rev. Daniel Holme Pilkington's appointment as vicar of St. Barnabas' had been approved by the King. It would however be wrong to imagine that this appointment was not also desired by the Bishop, for an agreement had been reached with the Crown that, where livings had not been filled during the war, they should, despite the lapse, be filled at the suggestion of the original patron.

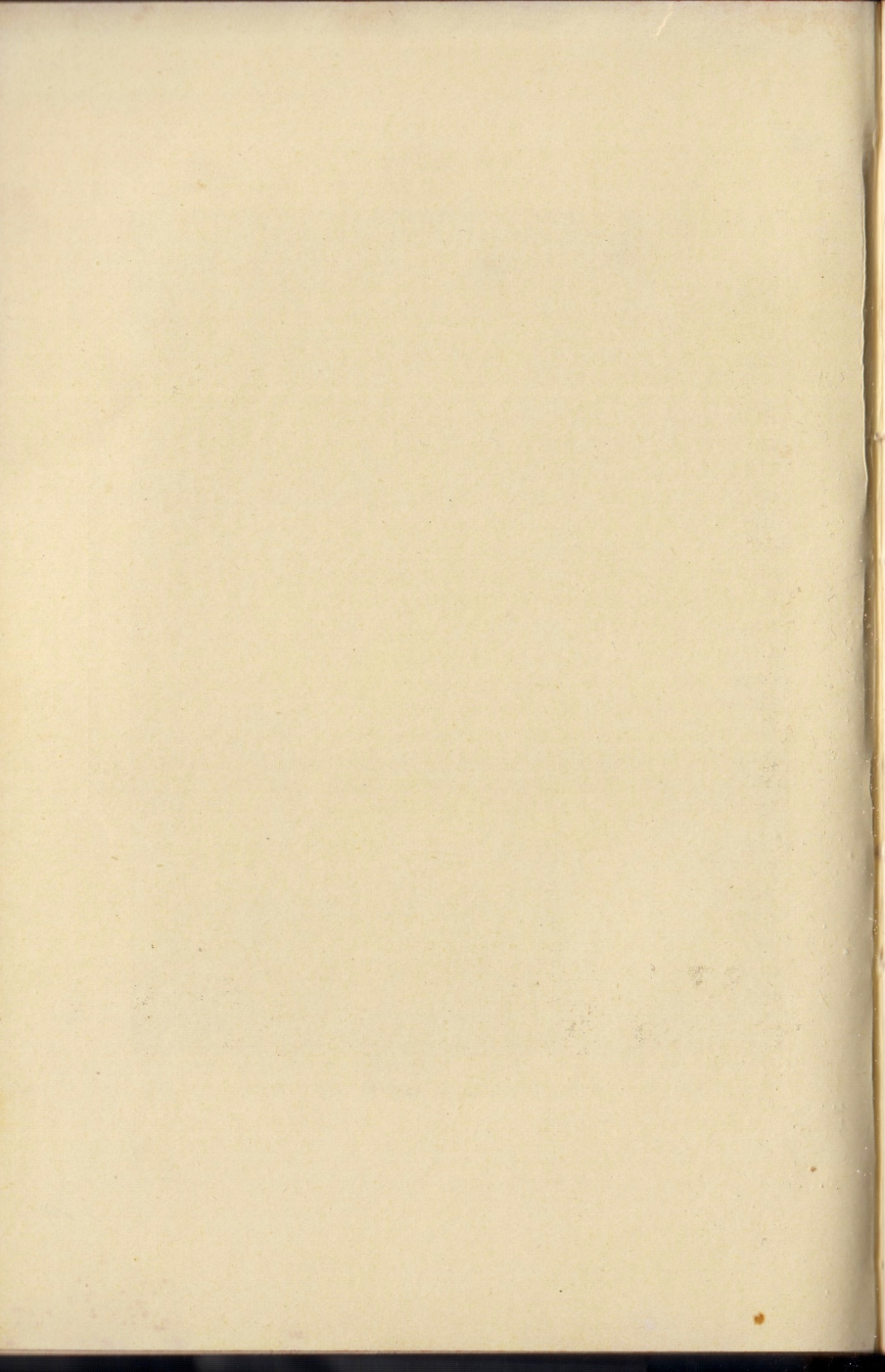
Like Canon Mortlock, Mr. Pilkington was educated at Haileybury and from there he went to Pembroke College, Cambridge. His university studies were interrupted by the outbreak of the Great War, for he joined the army on 5th August 1914. He was wounded in the Battle of the Somme in July 1916 and was discharged in September 1917, having received a shoulder wound and had his right hand amputated. For his first year back in civilian life he was a teacher at Eastbourne, but then took holy orders and in 1919 became curate at the Parish Church, Eastbourne. He served a second curacy at Slaughtam



The remains of the old vicarage

C. Hollyfield

Photo



with Handcross from 1923 to 1926 and then was vicar of Gezina, Transvaal until 1931. He returned to England on holiday and was forced by a series of accidents to remain here, becoming for a short time curate at East Grinstead Parish Church, then vicar of Fairwarp (1933-7) and of Goring-by-Sea (1937-43). He was instituted at St. Barnabas' on 1st October by the Bishop of Chichester, who paid a tribute to all those, both clergy and laity, who had kept the church open during the long inter-regnum.

Once again it seemed as though Bexhill would suffer little more from the war and the holiday trade began to revive. Both the Bishop and the new vicar pointed out that the residents in the parish of St. Barnabas' were called to present such a form of Christian community life to those who came on holiday that they might go away richer spiritually. But before peace came war had still one more terror in store. In 1944 came the flying bombs and although only twelve landed in the town many more caused anxiety as they passed. In October 1944 the *Observer* published a map showing where the 328 high explosive bombs dropped over the town in the course of the war had fallen. About fifty of them had landed in the small parish of St. Barnabas'. The parish register records that no flying bombs fell in Bexhill after August 1944 and from this time onwards St. Barnabas' was able to change gradually back to a full peace-time life.

In keeping with the more economical attitude of mind prevailing after the Second World War, and the smaller number of casualties, no large new war-memorial was planned. Instead a second plaque was added to the existing memorial in the churchyard. It bore no names of the fallen, only the simple text from the story of David and Abigail:

"The men were very good unto us,
They were a wall unto us,
By night and day."

The new plaque was dedicated on Remembrance Sunday 1949 by the Bishop of Lewes.

During the war parish magazines had had to be suspended and the *Bexhill Observer* kindly published monthly church notes. At the beginning of 1944 the *St. Barnabas' News Sheet* started to appear monthly, and gradually its size was increased and insets were added until a complete *St. Barnabas' magazine* was produced. The old custom of all parishes sharing a town magazine was not revived after the war, but the *Observer* still continued its monthly allocation of space, so the various churches were not completely without seeing each others' news. The new vicar of *St. Barnabas'* brought a new touch to the pages of the magazine. Gone was both the rather austere and laconic account of facts favoured by Canon Mortlock and the more facile, professional style of Canon Davies with its regular inclusion of funny stories. Instead Mr. Pilkington's own editorials were much more personal in their approach and other items came from members of the different parish organizations. Yet there could not fail to be humour too from a vicar whose whereabouts at any social parish gathering is always indicated by hearty gusts of laughter. His new year letter for 1947 is a good example of the vicar in his lightest vein:

" Dear People,

" I have just spent thirty minutes writing the ' Vicar's Letter ', only to end by writing in large characters ' BLAH ' at the end of it and crossing it all out ! Some lucky people seem to find it easy to write, but it is sweat and tears for me. I do not know whether it is pride that makes me hate to expose my incompetence in print for all to see or a praiseworthy hatred of wasting your time and my own by filling up space with clichés and blather—probably a bit of both.

" Anyhow, I am so pressed for time in this busy Christmas season that I cannot wait for my reluctant muse to

bring me inspiration and shall baldly state the following facts, which are at the moment fighting for a place in what I optimistically call my thoughts. (You may amuse yourselves if you have nothing better to do (which you should have), by arranging them in order of importance.) Cambridge has lost the Varsity rugby match against Oxford (but not by so much as one expected), England has already lost two Test matches (but have had no luck), our hens only lay about one egg in two days (but some people's do not seem to be laying any), the cellar is practically empty (but the coal is supposed to be coming to-morrow). Most of the questionnaires have been taken round, thanks to the kindness of the pains-taking distributors (but there are still some to go out), a good number of answers have been received (but, as usually found whenever tried, the questionnaire plan reveals the enormous number of people who may see the relevance of Christianity, but certainly do not see the relevance of the Church), two more recruits have joined the choir (but we need twenty), two more servers have joined us (but we need more badly), thanks to generous givers and the good work of Mrs. Humphrys, Mrs. Marsh and my wife there are fourteen food parcels ready packed (but over fifty more tins to pack), there are draughts in the church, for the windows need repairing (but the diocese have said we can get on with it and they will pay), the stable for the crib must be made (but I have drawn the plans), there's an extra page of news needed for the magazine (but I have written about five hundred words already and actually included some bits of news), I have got a cold in my eye and look a funny sight with a pale pink eye shade (but it is better and I have just flung the shade away). It is time I went to bed (*verb. sap.*).

" All good wishes for the new year.

Yours affectionately,

DAN PILKINGTON "

When Mr. Pilkington first came to Bexhill the only clergy house the parish possessed was the Lodge, and he and his family lived there until 1946. This arrangement was not ideal for St. Barnabas' Lodge is a little small for a vicarage, especially as regards the study, and as long as the vicar lived there no house was available for any assistant clergyman. The second of these difficulties was of little practical importance immediately after the war while the parish was too poor to support more than one priest.

In 1945, however, Brassey Lodge came on to the market and the generosity of the congregation at the time made it possible for the P.C.C. to buy it. The parish was still unable to make such a purchase and employ two full-time priests, but it was now possible to offer the Lodge to a retired priest, Canon H. R. White, in return for "surplice duty". By 1948 St. Barnabas' had sufficiently recovered from the effects of the war to appoint the Rev. J. E. Gowing as their first full-time assistant curate since the war.

The new vicar shared Canon Davies' view that the people of St. Barnabas' could and should do much to help those less fortunately placed than themselves, even in the years of austerity immediately after the war. For a second time, therefore, St. Barnabas' "adopted" a parish, not this time in the industrial north of England, but in the war-devasted north of Germany. At first parcels of food and clothing were sent to St. Michael's House, Hamburg, a hostel run as a centre for giving young Germans experience of Christian community life and opportunity for free discussion. One of these young people, Marianne Lippertz, later came to England on a youth leaders' training course and was entertained for a fortnight in St. Barnabas' parish. The warden of St. Michael's House, the Rev. R. Goodchild, whose father frequently assisted at the services in St. Barnabas', put the parish in touch with Pastor Kohlschmidt in Ham-

burg, and when St. Michael's House was closed parcels were sent direct to the Christuskirchegemeinde (Parish of Christ Church) of which Pastor Kohlschmidt was in charge.

Many pen-friends were established between the two parishes, and one pair at least were able to meet in later years. Despite rationing, both clothes and food, and even sweets from the Sunday school children, continued to be sent month by month through the years immediately following the war.

At the annual church meeting in March 1948 it was reported that there were in the parish thirty-five "Friends" of St. Michael's House, whose subscriptions had provided £19 towards its work. Beyond this £17 had been contributed to cover expenses of parcels sent direct to the "adopted" parish. Gifts of food, all rationed, and clothes, had been sufficient to make up seventy-two food parcels of twelve pounds each and thirty-nine parcels each containing the maximum weight of twenty-two pounds of clothing.

As in the case of Stockton there were those who thought such gifts unnecessary, but it is possible that these people were answered by the first-hand accounts of life in Hamburg given by Pastor Kohlschmidt when he and his wife and son visited Bexhill in 1949 and also by the assistant curate and his wife after their visit to Hamburg that same summer.

Although St. Barnabas' had lost its vicarage and suffered some damage to church windows it was comparatively unscathed by the side of its "adopted" parish. The Christuskirche itself was rendered unusable, and as funds for repairs were lacking the gaping cracks in the roof and west wall continued to widen year by year. All services had to be held in the parish hall, which, though fortunately fairly large, was certainly not designed to be used as a church. Of the three parsonage

houses only one had escaped damage, although the second, in which the Kohlschmidts lived was still habitable, by Hamburg standards, and had to serve many purposes besides that of dwelling house. The large cellar housed the confirmation class, and the bathroom, through whose ceiling the laths and beyond them the daylight showed, served as a sorting place for clothes' parcels from Bexhill.

Before the war the Christuskirchegemeinde had had a population of 50,000 and it was estimated that there were still 35,000 people living there after the war, although two-thirds of the housing accommodation had been destroyed. This resulted in overcrowding on an incredible scale—five-roomed flats housing four families. Lack of money prevented any rebuilding being done, and the rubble lay untouched as it had fallen, forming acres and acres of desolation. Yet there were many unemployed builders amongst those who lived there, sinking ever further into despair. A typical family was one of four people living in half a nissen hut. The father had no wearable shirt and was ashamed to look for work in his vest. The children were undernourished and already suffered badly from rheumatism. In another hut three children died of cold one winter night.

The Church seemed to be fighting an uphill battle against the nihilism and indifference engendered by such circumstances. All that St. Barnabas' could send was little more than a drop in this ocean of sheer physical need, yet it did serve to show some few at least that the Church reached across national barriers and cared for the individual in distress.

Almost as soon as Bexhill was safe for visitors a request came from a lady in London asking if a party of children from London could sleep on the floor of the lower vestry for a night, so that they could have a weekend by the sea. She wrote that she would pay their fares and they would each bring a blanket with them. Perhaps

a blanket on the floor was a normal sleeping arrangement for the children, but it fell short of Bexhill standards. Camp beds and three blankets apiece were borrowed and later bought so that such visits might be possible. In 1947 six parties of ten children each were thus entertained in the vestry from Saturday morning to Sunday evening. Brownies, guides, cubs and scouts came from St. Mark's, Camberwell, and later in the year a party of children from Peckham. A bathing hut was booked for them on the beach and various ladies of the parish shared in the work of giving them a personal welcome.

Meanwhile the ordinary daily life of the parish was being re-established. The electoral roll was started again from scratch, as that compiled before the war was felt to be worthless. Even starting afresh it was not easy to keep the roll accurate, so quickly does the population of this part of the town change. Inquiries into the whereabouts of those confirmed at St. Barnabas' since the coming of its third vicar showed that of nineteen confirmed in the years 1943-6, twelve had left the parish by 1950. This situation was partly due to a second great exodus to the new Sidley housing estate, which grew rapidly as soon as building became possible.

From the summer of 1946 onwards daily Matins and Evensong were re-introduced into the church, and Evensong on Sundays was followed by a non-liturgical service for those who found the Prayer Book service hard to follow. The short break between Evensong and this special service made it possible for those who could not or did not wish to attend both to enter or leave. During Lent the vicar often devoted his sermons at this service to answering questions submitted by the congregation.

Under Canon Davies the P.C.C. was often divided into sub-committees commissioned to deal with some particular task: the building of St. Augustine's; the alteration of the sanctuary; the question of how best to cater for the young people in the parish. Mr. Pilkington divided it

permanently into three sub-committees, each assigned a particular part of the work of the church, roughly parish finances, parish activities, and missionary work. The understanding that each warden should serve only for three years again became operative, though it was also felt wiser that only one warden should retire at a time, so that continuity might be preserved. Gradually almost the entire composition of the P.C.C. has changed till now of those who served in the hardest years of the war only Miss Baird, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Granger and Mr. Poulton remain. The last named gentleman celebrated his fiftieth year at St. Barnabas' in 1948 when he ceased to be secretary of the P.C.C., becoming instead its treasurer. (For a list of some, though probably not all, of his services see appendix 1.)

As a token of gratitude he was presented with a barometer, which would seem an inappropriate return for such faithfulness, had he not chosen it himself.

In thanking those who had subscribed he said he loved St. Barnabas' very much and a good many people in it. "Perhaps if I live long enough I shall love them all," he added amid laughter.

When the whole P.C.C. met it not only discussed matters brought forward by its sub-committees and concerning the immediate life of the parish, but also topics of wider interest, thus continuing the tradition started by Canon Mortlock and carried on by Canon Davies. In town affairs an active part was taken in the work of the Bexhill Council of Churches and in the formation of the Association of Bexhill Citizens. While St. Peter's housed the University Extension lectures, one of the Oxford Tutorial classes arranged under the Workers' Educational Association met regularly in St. Barnabas' lower vestry.

At a yet wider level the Christian attitude to war was discussed by the P.C.C. and other members of the con-

gregation. The report of the Amsterdam Conference on this subject was considered at some length and an attempt was made to induce other parishes to do likewise. Various resolutions on the Christian attitude to war, and in particular to the use of the atom bomb were forwarded to the Diocesan Conference and to the headquarters of the World Council of Churches at Geneva.

The healing work of the church also retained its important place in the life of the parish. No longer was it a question of providing a parish nurse. The National Health Service and the local "Meals on Wheels", had removed the need for the Church to provide physical care for the sick. Now she was free to deal more particularly with the spiritual side of healing. Regular healing services with the laying on of hands for those who desire it have been introduced, and in 1950 a special healing mission was conducted by the Rev. John Gayner Banks, D.S.T., the Warden of the (International) Order of St. Luke the Physician, who was on a visit from America.

In 1949 the parish was faced with a heavy bill for rewiring the church. When electricity had first been installed it had been fitted into the existing gas-brackets. Now, after more than forty years, the wiring was liable to break down at any time, and some of the gas pendants were none too safe. The money from St. Barnabas' gift day was devoted to this and a special committee worked throughout the year organizing sales and entertainments to provide further funds. The architect in charge of the work was Mr. Charles Callow, F.R.I.B.A. and after some discussion it was decided to replace the old fittings with "Holophane" lighting (reflector refractor) system.

An important aspect of parish life since the war has been the number of organizations meeting on weekdays. These have included the Good Companions (composed of the ladies of the congregation), discussion groups of various ages and sizes, social evenings, a club for choir

boys, various open youth clubs and finally a branch of the Guild of St. Richard. The library for laymen received a new lease of life and an "adults' corner" or small reading room was provided at the back of the church. In one year 532 books were borrowed. A Christmas crib and an Easter garden were also introduced.

The great difficulty for all such activities continued to be the lack of a parish hall. This has to some extent been obviated by making the greatest possible use of the Lower Vestry. As soon as possible after the war the damage to the cupboards was made good and the beams used to strengthen the room removed. The small room that had served as a mortuary in the days before the chapel of All Souls was converted into a kitchen and a catering licence obtained so that refreshments could be served when necessary. The question of building a parish hall either on the kitchen garden site, or on some other part of the old vicarage grounds continued to form a regular subject for discussion. Money was no longer a great obstacle as the parish hall fund had collected a substantial balance over the years, but building restrictions and the question as to whether a hall really was necessary have so far prevented anything being done.

The report of the P.C.C. for 1950, presented at the annual church meeting in 1951, nearly sixty years after the first collection was made for a hall, sums up the whole history of the hall: "Much thought has been given to the desirability or otherwise of building a parish hall, but no final decision has been reached."

* * * * *

Thus through the sixty years of its history the life of St. Barnabas' has faithfully mirrored the changing times and throughout that period has itself been marked by

certain characteristics. Although not the parish church of Bexhill, St. Barnabas' has played an influential part in the life of the town, especially in matters of health and education. Nor have the interests of its people at any time been limited solely to the town: help has been given to less fortunate individuals and parishes, and some degree of responsibility felt for national and international behaviour. Above all it has always tried to provide a spiritual home for all who live or stay within its boundaries.



CHAPTER

X

WINDOWS

All the stained glass windows in the church were designed and executed by the same firm, Messrs. Heaton, Butler and Bayne.

EAST

As early as 1891 Lady Cantelupe suggested she would like to fill the east window as a memorial to Lady Brassey, but for some reason this was not done. The suggestion that the window should represent the Church triumphant and Our Lord seated in glory was first mooted by Canon Mortlock in 1904, yet it was not until nearly ten years later that money began to be collected for this purpose. One third of the cost was finally raised by subscriptions from many parishioners, the remainder being given by an anonymous worshipper at the church, and the window was dedicated by the vicar on 27th October 1918.

The window depicts the ultimate triumph of the Church of God, and the worship of Our Blessed Lord by the multitude of the redeemed. It is based on the Revelation of St. John, chapters four and five. Right at the top of the window are the Alpha and Omega and the Lamb. In the centre our Lord is seated on the throne holding the sealed book. Around the throne is the rainbow, in front of it the "sea of glass like unto crystal". Above are the four living creatures with the words "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Which was and is and is to come," below the four and twenty elders playing harps. About the throne are hosts of worshipping angels, singing

" Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." At the bottom of the window is the universal ascription of praise recorded by St. John " Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

LADY CHAPEL

In 1908, when the church was enlarged by the addition of the wide south aisle, the windows were removed from the west end of the north and south aisles and placed in the three-windowed apse of the Lady chapel. One of the two windows was a memorial to Miss Evelyn Stanley Clarke, thanks to whose generous bequest the new aisle and Lady chapel had been built. The third window, portraying the presentation of Our Lord in the Temple, was given by many small subscriptions and was dedicated in 1911. In 1942 the Lady chapel was damaged by the bomb which destroyed the vicarage, and the only window in the apse to escape was the memorial to Miss Clarke which was then on the north side. This window, which depicts the adoration by the shepherds, has now been moved to the centre of the apse.

South wall

IN THE LADY CHAPEL

This window, which was entitled " The Good Physician ", was given by subscription in 1916 in memory of Dr. J. P. B. Wills, who was the first vicar's warden of St. Barnabas', a position he had held for twenty-one years. It was completely destroyed in 1942, apart from six small fragments in the tracery showing angels' heads.

OVER THE SOUTH DOOR

This window too was blown out in 1942 and nothing remains in the original place except some little angels in

the tracery and a tablet inscribed " In loving memory of Herbert Ernest Fenner this window was erected by his sister, L. M. Smithers ". The window, whose subject was the Resurrection, was described in 1935 when it was put in as " beautiful in design, its colour tones more transparent and brilliant than those of the other Bayne windows in the church." Evidence of this may be found in the Mortlock and Fletcher window.

MORTLOCK AND FLETCHER

In 1925 Miss J. A. Fletcher left a bequest for a stained glass window in memory of her sisters. The legacy was sufficient to instal two lights of a large window depicting the crucifixion. The third light was given by Canon Mortlock in memory of his father, Edward Thomas Mortlock. The window shows Our Lord on the Cross with Mary Magdalene kneeling behind in the centre light, and St. John and the Blessed Virgin in the lights on either side. The window was badly damaged in 1942, but was later repaired by Messrs. Barton, Kinder and Alderson, and some of the glass from the Fenner window appears to have been incorporated then. The angel above the centre light, bearing the irrelevant words " they go into Galilee ", would seem to be a composite figure built from the fragments of the three angels over the resurrection window, who had held the words " Be not afraid, go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee."

WEST

The large window at the west end of the church was given by parishioners and members of the congregation as a thankoffering for victory and as such is a memorial of those who died in the 1914-18 war. It was dedicated on 29th November 1919 by Canon T. Cook, later Bishop of Lewes. At the very top of the window can be seen a Dove, brooding over the earth. This is the symbol of God the Holy Ghost, who at the beginning brought order

out of chaos. It was a dove that brought the good tidings to Noah that the waters of the flood had subsided and it is the Holy Ghost who reminds us "that God sitteth above the waterflood: the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace." Coming to the two central lights, we see the angels at the nativity of the Prince of Peace, the forerunners of a multitude of the heavenly host bringing God's message of peace to a stricken world. The two angels in the foreground carry a scroll with the words "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men." Below them are the shepherds looking up from earth to heaven to hear the angels' song, while beneath can be read God's promise given in Isaiah, chapter fifty-seven, verse nineteen: "Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him." In the two exterior lights four representations are seen of the operations of the world, disturbed by war, recommencing in time of peace. On the left is the sower, over the words "Sow to yourselves in righteousness." Underneath is a picture of masons engaged in building a church, and below them are the words "Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone." On the right is the reaper, with the words "Reap in mercy." Below the reaper, blacksmiths are shown at their anvil, "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares." The final inscription records the occasion which inspired this "Peace" window, and runs "A Thankoffering to God Who giveth Victory. A.D. 1918."

North aisle

APOSTLE WINDOWS

In 1892 it was suggested that as the small apostle windows in the north aisle cost only £25 each people might be able to give them as personal memorials and thankofferings. It is not clear exactly when each window was given, but it would seem they were put in from east to west.

St. Peter was given in 1897 as an anonymous thank-offering for recovery from a severe illness.

St. James was also presented anonymously in 1907. This window represents St. James the Great, holding in his right hand a copy of the gospels and in his left a pilgrim's staff surmounted by a water-bottle formed out of a hollowed gourd.

The next two windows represent St. John and St. Barnabas.

St. Luke was given in memory of Miss Helen Florence Griffin, who died in 1927.

Finally, in the portion curtained off for the library, comes a window of St. Paul.

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

In the main porch at the west end of the church are three little windows entitled " Faith, Hope and Charity " which were given in 1895 in memory of Frank Edward Huckvale.

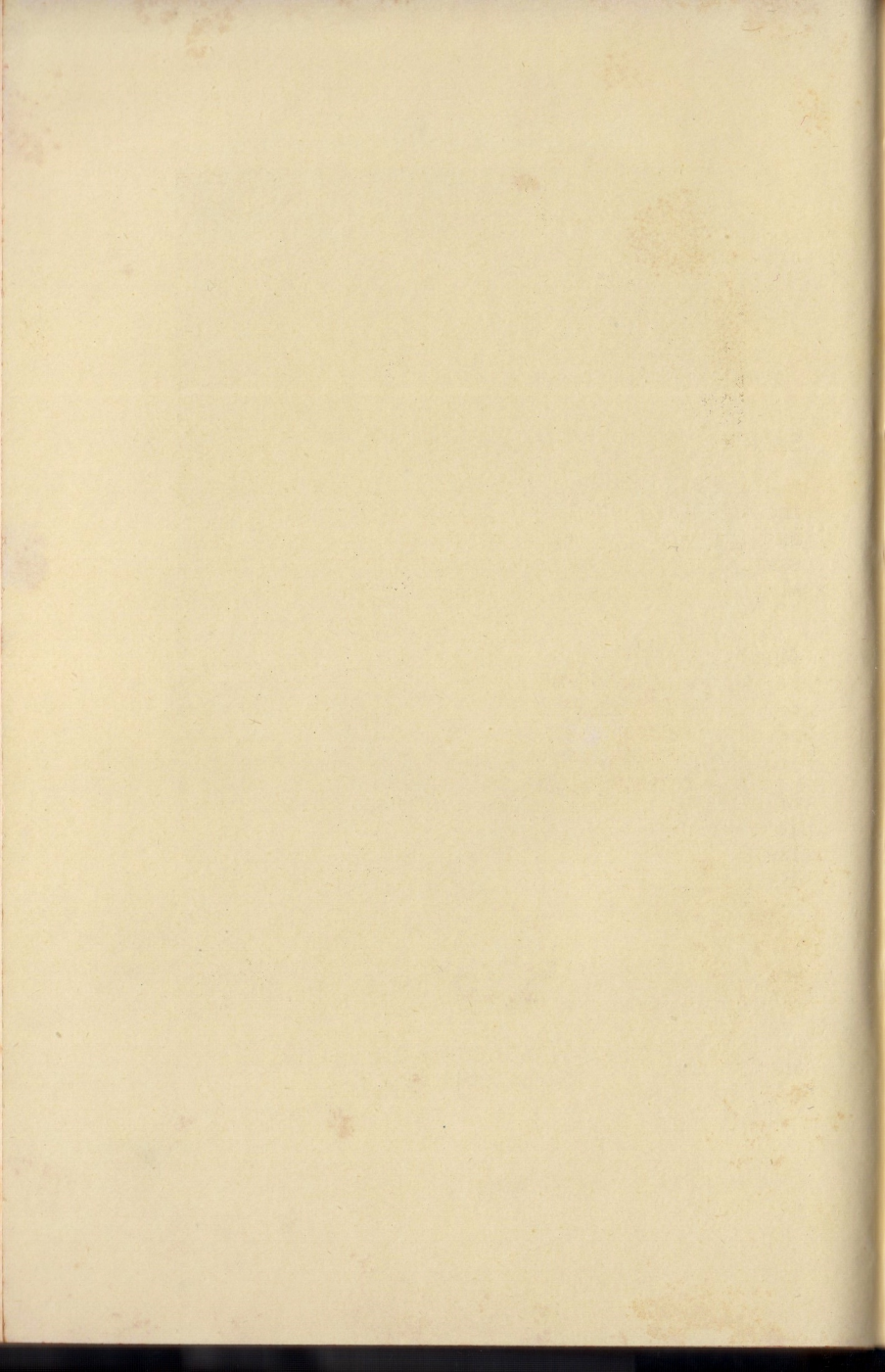




**The Rev. D. H. Pilkington and the
Kohlschmidt family**

Photo

Mrs. Basil Martin



CHAPTER

XI

CHURCH ORNAMENTS AND FURNISHINGS

The sanctuary

SANCTUARY VESSELS

The first of these were given by Mrs. Stanley Clarke, the wife of the founder. Two silver chalices and patens, and a glass flagon embossed with silver, bear the inscription "*In usum ecclesiae S. Barnabas Bexhill ex dono A. Elizabethae J. Clarke fest. S. Barnabas 1891.*"

Another silver chalice and paten were given by Canon Mortlock and his wife in memory of his father, as may be seen from the inscription "*A.M.D.G. in piam memoriam Edward Thomas Mortlock ex dono E.M., K.D.M. 1909.*"

The silver lavabo bearing the inscription "In memory of our dear mother's last communion, August 17th, 1934" is in memory of Frances Georgina Gibson, whose husband had frequently helped with the services at St. Barnabas'.

A silver wafer box is inscribed "*A.M.D.G. et in memoriam L.A.B. ex dono G.E.M.*" and an alms dish "*In piam memoriam M.M.F. ex dono G.E.F.-L.C.F.*" but there seems no evidence as to whom these initials commemorate.

The other wafer box, the two ciboria and various minor vessels have no inscription.

A second alms dish, made of copper, is inscribed " In Dankbarkeit die Christuskirchegemeinde Hamburg-Eimsbüttel 1949." This dish was made from part of the metal of the war-damaged Christuskirche in the Hamburg parish which St. Barnabas' adopted after the second world war. It was presented to the church when Pastor and Mrs. Kohlschmidt were brought over for a holiday in Bexhill, and was received with gratitude as an alms dish. Yet the donors in Hamburg had intended it to be used for the water at baptisms, an interesting example of the different ornaments used by different churches.

The alms dish most frequently used is a large one of brass, bearing the text " Freely ye have received, freely give. "

VESTMENTS AND FRONTALS

The first set of embroidered vestments possessed by St. Barnabas' were made between 1929 and 1934 by an embroidery guild composed of ladies of the parish under the guidance of the Misses Swinhoe. The vestments thus cost no more than the price of the raw materials and this was contributed by various communicants. Miss E. Swinhoe was usually responsible for the design, and the work on a single set of vestments took as long as eighteen months. The novices in the guild were started on simpler things such as the alms bags and the chasubles were entrusted to the more skilled workers.

When these vestments were first made they were worn only at the Sung Eucharist, and when vestments came to be used at all celebrations it was felt that these original sets were too valuable to be used daily. A second series was therefore made over the years 1944-50. These simpler sets which are used on weekdays were made by Mrs. Mitchell, a member of the congregation.

The altar frontals were made by Miss Swinhoe and the Embroidery Guild.

THE REREDOS

The reredos, which in 1936 replaced the old hangings, provides a splash of colour which beautifies the whole church. The two predominating colours in the reredos are gold and a bright red, which yet tones admirably with the red brick of the building. The central panel shows Our Lord on the Cross, with His Mother and St. John on either hand. To the left are St. Barnabas and St. Andrew, and in the panels on the right St. Peter and St. Augustine. Thus the saints represented are those of the "mother church", of St. Barnabas' itself, and of the two daughter churches.

CANDLESTICKS

The sanctuary standards given by Lord and Lady Cantelupe in 1891 were replaced when the sanctuary was altered and the new pair were presented in memory of W. M. Morant. The inscription on the brass sockets reads: "A.M.D.G. and in memory of Cpt. W. M. Morant, D.L.I., killed in action, Merville, 18.4.1918. Presented by his father."

The two portable candlesticks used at the Sung Eucharist are turned from Northamptonshire oak, felled about A.D. 1100, to the order of St. Simon de Liz, who built the church of the Holy Sepulchre, Northampton (one of the four round churches in England), as a thank-offering for safe return from the crusades. After the Rev. B. H. Davies had left St. Sepulchre's, where he had been vicar, the great beams of the belfrey were found to have rotted at the ends and these candlesticks were made from one of the beams.

The candlesticks in the Lady chapel and also the episcopal chair in the sanctuary were given in 1937 in memory of Annette Margaret Slade.

PROCESSIONAL CROSSES

The church possesses four processional crosses, one in oak and without any inscription, the other three of brass. Two of these are adorned with the symbols of the four evangelists, one having been given in 1896 by Miss Wade in memory of Rachel Susanna and Barbara Wade, the other presented by the St. Barnabas' guild of servers in 1925. The fourth cross was given to the church in memory of Canon H. R. White, by his widow in 1947.

Lady chapel

The front screen of the chapel was given by public subscription in 1911 and the side screen a few years later in memory of Dr. Wills, churchwarden. The oak floor was laid in 1926 as a memorial to Florence Selle. The credence table was given by Miss Mason, for many years sacristan, in memory of her mother. The chair, which now serves as the priest's chair in the Lady chapel, was originally the episcopal chair in the main sanctuary.

An interesting story attaches to the little crucifix on the south wall. A British soldier took part in an offensive against the French in the Peninsula war, and during an advance passed a Spanish church which had been set on fire by the British artillery. Noticing a crucifix hanging on a damaged wall of the blazing church, he put it in his pack. One of his descendants presented it to St. Barnabas' as a thankoffering.

The decoration of the chapel roof was carried out in 1922 by Miss M. Tongue of Arundel, an artist who had had experience of church decoration in France.

From left to right the saints in the frieze are:

St. Augustine;
St. George;
The Venerable Bede, with his book;
St. Helena, with the cross;
St. James, brother of John, with his fisherman's net;
Joan of Arc;

and, on the other side:

St. Stephen, holding a stone;
St. Thomas à Becket;
St. Geneviève, the patron saint of Paris;
St. Louis, holding a model of Sainte-Chapelle;
A child who was martyred in A.D. 1215;
St. Catherine of Sienna, with a crown of thorns as a
symbol of austerity and fasting;
St. Francis of Assisi;
St. Martin of Tours.

A faculty has been granted for the placing of a statue of the Madonna in the Lady chapel in memory of Mrs. A. J. Home. This statue has been carved by Mr. P. J. Dapré.

The nave

PULPIT

The oak pulpit was given by Canon Clarke's sister at the time the church was built, but the sounding board above it was not added till nearly forty years later. Dr. W. F. Sheard wished to place some memorial to his wife in the church, and willingly agreed that it should be in the form of a sounding board. This was rendered necessary by the difficult accoustics of the building, due to its great height and width. To be audible, any preacher had to speak at least twice as slowly as natural. When the sounding board was added, the pulpit was moved slightly to the north, so that only one side of the choir should be screened by it. The canopy was carved to match the screen and a large oak panel on the north of the pulpit was soon replaced by glass panels to balance the open bays of the screen between the choir and organ. Before the board was in position Dr. Sheard had himself died, and a small plaque was affixed to the sounding board in memory of both him and his wife.

CRUCIFIX

The carved wooden crucifix hanging near the pulpit was brought from Ober-Ammergau after the Passion Play of 1934 as a personal gift from a parishioner to Canon Davies. When he retired, however, he left various personal possessions, including this crucifix, to the church.

LECTERN

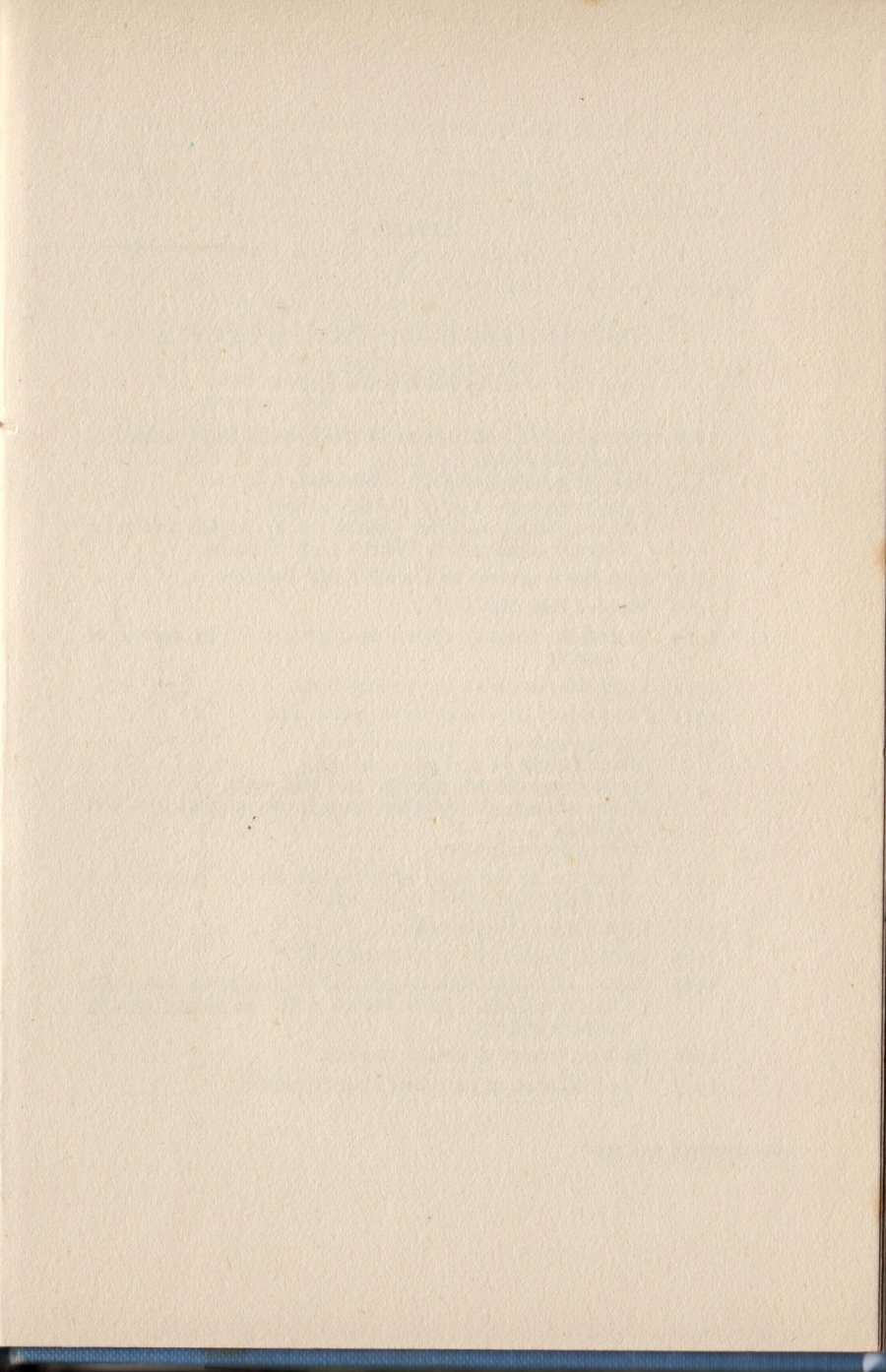
After the church had been enlarged the original lectern appeared disproportionately small and in 1923 an appeal was made for funds to buy a larger one. There was a little money in hand from the funds raised for the peace window and the remainder was raised within a few months, which enabled the present brass eagle lectern to be installed.

FONT

The font was given by Miss E. Stanley Clarke, so it is appropriate that it now stands in the part of the church built by her bequest. It is of Hopton Wood stone, mounted on a base of Weldon rag.

The All Souls' chapel

This little chapel is situated at the west end of the south aisle, but can only be reached from the central west porch. Before being converted to its present purpose this part of the church was a baptistry, and was then partitioned off from the main body of the church by an open screen similar to that round the chancel. Close examination shows where the original screen has been filled in. All the furnishings in the chapel are of oak and were given by members of the congregation in memory of relations.



APPENDIX

I

SOME OF MR. POULTON'S ACTIVITIES

- 1898 Appointed as headmaster of newly-built boys' school in Reginald Road.
Became a sidesman at St. Barnabas'.
- 1900 Superintendent of boys' Sunday school.
Did secretarial work for Church Lads' Brigade and later became lieutenant in Church Lads' Brigade.
- 1903 Appointed captain of Church Lads' Brigade.
- 1906 Married Miss McCreedy.
- 1909 Talked to Sunday school teachers on "The theory of teaching".
- 1911 Took the children's service regularly.
- 1915 Did variety of jobs while verger was ill.
- 1920 Representative on diocesan synod.
Wrote names on first electoral roll.
On diocesan council (first formed this year).
First secretary of parochial church council and free will offering.
On finance committee.
- 1921 Ceased to be secretary of parochial church council, but kept all other offices as in 1920.
- 1922 Deputized as verger again.
- 1923 Honorary secretary of electoral roll.
- 1925 Ceased all his secretaryships and no longer on parochial church council. Nevertheless acted as verger during verger's holiday.
- 1926 Back on parochial church council.
- 1927 Vice-chairman of parochial church council.

- 1929 Secretary of parochial church council, an office which he held till 1948.
- 1934 Became churchwarden (for three years).
- 1938 Retired from being headmaster. Co-opted on to education committee.
- 1939 Representative on diocesan council.
- 1941 Took over secretaryship of free will offering fund, at time when most people evacuated.
- 1943 Acted as vergers at Mr. Pilkington's institution.
- 1948 Ceased to be secretary of parochial church council, but remained its treasurer, an office he had taken over the previous year.
- 1949 Presented with testimonial after fifty years' service.
- 1951 Still treasurer of parochial church council, sidesman, server, and reader of lessons at Matins and Evensong.



APPENDIX

II

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

A. Communicants on Easter Sunday at five-yearly intervals 1892-1951.

1892	155	
1897	463	
1902	570	(and 218 more at St. Andrew's)
1907	680	(over 200 more at St. Andrew's)
1912	799	from this time onwards)
1917	769	
1922	878	
1927	1,083	
1932	839	
1937	742	
1942	175*	
1947	596	
1951	735	

B. Communicants on Easter Sunday, the first Sunday in February and the first Sunday in August.

	<i>Easter</i>	<i>1st February</i>	<i>1st August</i>	
1892	155	20	59	(in 1891)
1900	592	118	126	
1910	750	177	219	
1920	911	136	140	
1930	897	120	171	
1940	671	105	73*	(236 in 1939)
1950	645	113	182	

One of the most interesting things shown by this comparative table is how slight was the difference between winter and summer communicants before 1930, and how much it has increased since. Probably this was due not only to an increased number of visitors in the summer but even more to the exodus of the younger residents to Sidley which began in 1929.

*Low numbers due to war.

C. Total number of marriages and baptisms at St. Barnabas' in each decade.

	<i>Marriages</i>	<i>Baptisms</i>
1891-1900	106	398
1901-1910	155	543
1911-1920	223	621
1921-1930	193	520
1931-1940	175	303
1941-1950	47	138

It is also worth taking the figures for each half of the last decade separately, to see how much these reduced numbers were due to the war, and how much to the changing age of the populations.

1941-1944	10	19
1945-1950	37	119

Even when doubled the figures for the five post-war years (74 marriages and 238 baptisms) do not reach those of any other decade.

D. 1931-1940 there were 293 persons confirmed from St. Barnabas'. A more detailed consideration of the figures reveals how few of these really belonged to the parish. For example in 1939 when 51 people were confirmed the number was made up as follows:

Ancaster House	22
Thornbank	12
War evacuees	7
Ellendeane	3
Others	7

Only these last 7 should really be compared with the post-war numbers.

1944-50 63 candidates were prepared for confirmation in the parish, and of these 20 were more than twenty-one years of age, the oldest being eighty-three.

APPENDIX

III

DIAMOND JUBILEE OF THE
CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

during the week 15th to 22nd July 1951

Sunday 15th July

- 7.0 and 8.0 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION.
9.45 a.m. SUNG EUCHARIST WITH PROCESSION.
Celebrant: The Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of Lewes.
11.15 a.m. MATINS—*Preacher:* The Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of Lewes.
3.30 p.m. "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN THE OPEN AIR"
—A team from St. Barnabas', on the lawn, just west of the Pavilion.
6.0 p.m. EVENSONG—*Preacher:* The Vicar.

Monday 16th July

- 7.30 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION.

Tuesday 17th July

- 8.0 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION.
8.0 p.m. RECITAL OF MUSIC IN CHURCH.

Wednesday 18th July. Thanksgiving Gift Day

- 7.30 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION.
7.45 p.m. FESTAL EVENSONG—*Preacher:* The Rev. Canon W. Godfrey Bell, Rector of the Mother Church of St. Peter and Rural Dean of Bexhill. The parishes of St. Augustine's and St. Andrew's, daughter Churches of St. Barnabas', are associated with us in this service; and all Anglican Churches in Bexhill together with the other member Churches of the Bexhill Council of Churches have been invited to attend. His Worship the Mayor and members of the Borough Council have promised to be present.

Thursday 19th July

12 noon HOLY COMMUNION.

7.15-9.45 p.m. DIAMOND JUBILEE SOCIAL in East Wing, De La Warr Pavilion. Entertainment by the Rev. Dr. H. S. Box (member of the Magic Circle), a former Assistant Curate.

"THE MAN WHO THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING" by members of the Guild of St. Richard.

Friday 20th July

8.0 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION.

ALL DAY EXHIBITION in church of pictures, literature, models, etc., to illustrate the connection of St. Barnabas' with work amongst children, divine healing, the Bible Reading Fellowship, and the Church Overseas.

THE CHURCH VESTMENTS will be on show at stated times with someone in attendance to explain their significance.

Saturday 21st July

7.30 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION.

THE EXHIBITION continues ALL DAY.

3.0 p.m. IN THE LOWER VESTRY. The Sunday School will present "A PLAY OF ALL GOOD THINGS".

Sunday 22nd July

7.0 and 8.0 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION.

9.45 a.m. SUNG EUCHARIST WITH PROCESSION.

11.15 a.m. *Celebrant:* The Ven. The Archdeacon of Hastings.
MATINS—*Preacher:* The Rev. R. G. Tremellen (Vicar of St. Luke's, Brighton), a former Assistant Curate of St. Peter's in charge of St. Barnabas'.

3.0 p.m. FESTIVAL SERVICE FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS. Address by Miss M. M. Hill, Diocesan Adviser for Religious Education.

6.0 p.m. EVENSONG WITH PROCESSION—*Preacher:* The Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of Chichester.

Morning and Evening Prayer will be said throughout the week at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. except on Wednesday when Evensong will be at 7.45 p.m. (see above).

The usual Monthly Healing Service will take place on Wednesday 18th July, being the third Wednesday in the month.

OFFERINGS DURING THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

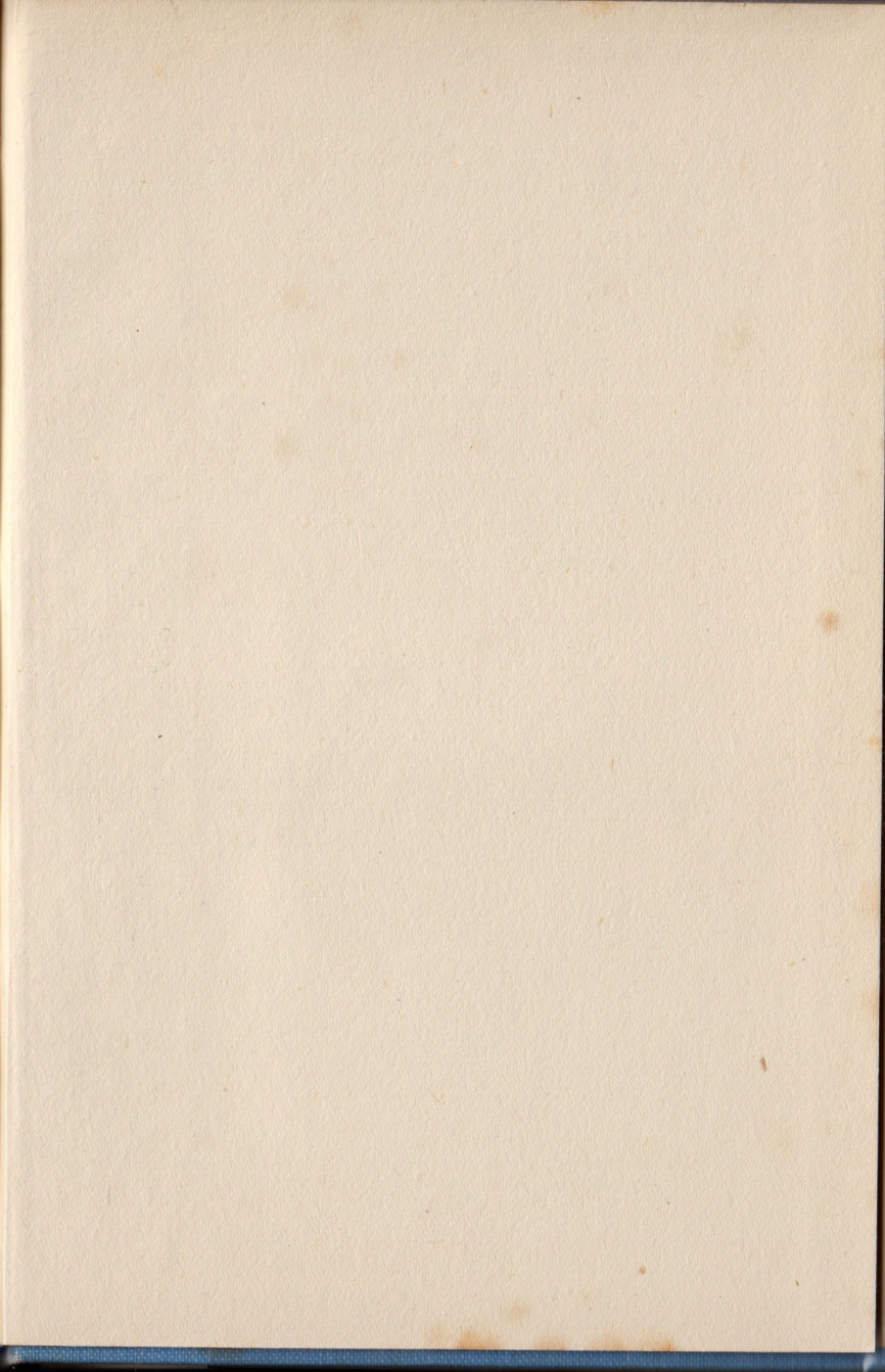
Collection on Sunday 15th July, towards the rebuilding of the bombed Church of St. Barnabas, Eltham, in the Diocese of Southwark £44

Thankofferings brought to church on Gift Day, plus the collection at the recital of music, towards the repair of the organ as a memorial to Canon Mortlock £202

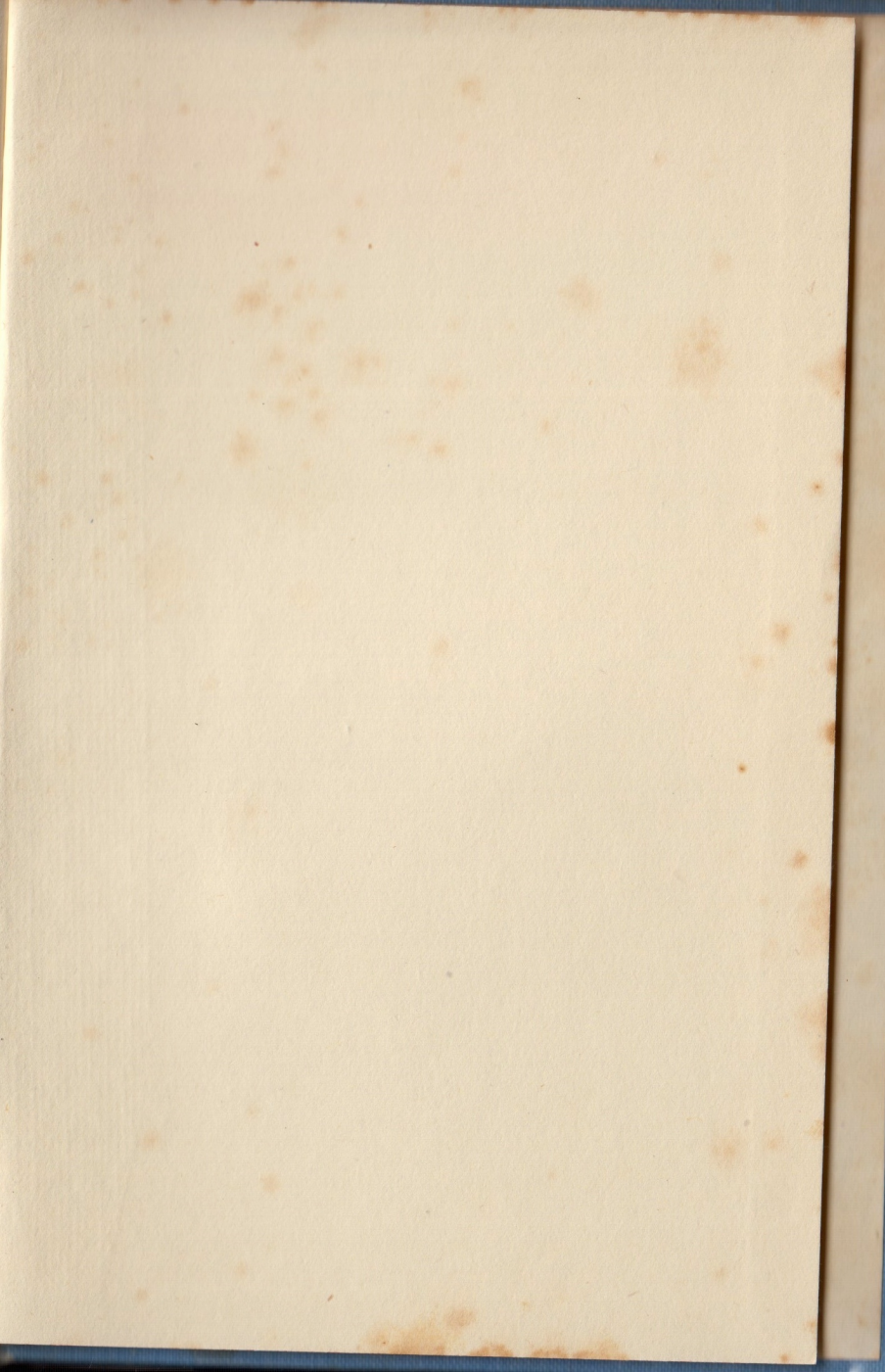
Collection at the Town Service on Wednesday 18th July, towards Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Work £16

Collections on Sunday 22nd July, towards the building of a permanent Church at St. Richard's, North Aldrington, in the Diocese of Chichester £42











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